

THEORISING PLACE AS PRACTICED OBJECT OF CONSUMPTION:

A STREET ETHNOGRAPHIC STORY

Volume 1 of 2

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(USHA SUNDARAM)

ABSTRACT

This study theorises and conceptualises place as an object of consumption, formed, shaped, and affected through practices. The study problematizes place treatments in extant managerial sciences and its contextual interpretations within consumption. It draws from a range of disciplinary inspirations from management studies, social sciences, philosophical, and phenomenological musings to empirically interrogate place construct using ethnography, in itself understood as placemaking practice. It analyses and interprets place through the lens of practice theories and non-representational methods to conceptualise place in consumption, and critically revisits its ontological hierarchy vis-à-vis space.

The study delivers several methodological, theoretical, and axiological contributions. It uses an adapted form of historical street ethnography to interrogate place, imbuing it with a critical reflexive standpoint, and positions a revitalised and reinvigorated street ethnography as a critical reflexive epistemic tool of knowledge production in the analytical transitions from phenomenological to post-phenomenological narratives.

The study's theoretical, discipline-specific contributions arise from synchronous examinations of place, consumption, practice, and non-representations. It empirically validates heuristics of non-representation and practices in contextually examining place in consumption, appreciates genomic qualities of practices brigaded through universality of human experiences as pools of actions and competencies articulating consumption, and contemplates place as

a processual, aspatial, fluid entity grasped beyond marketplace logic through practices. It expands understandings of marketplace, setting, structure, and actor, and invites attention to the liquefied, flowing nature of market and consumption through place plasticity and path-dependent practices. It emphasises the illocutionary force of place as object of consumption shaped through and in each moment of practice. The study empirically validates the reenchanting ontology of place, resituating it as the universal supreme abstract with space and time as component, co-constitutive elements, thus resituating extant place-space hierarchy.

The study's axiological and managerial contributions highlight mutability of practices in shaping place beyond marketplace logic in its many forms and settings, valorise everyday activities in shaping marketplace, illuminate the role of public, civic, and communal spaces and their contributions in the transition from market economy to marketized society not captured by marketplace discourses, and invite practice and non-representations into depictions of place marketing and consumption.

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I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Place is a pivotal crucible in people's lives. As physical, virtual, or metaphorical construct, place defines and shapes people's hopes and dreams inasmuch as it is shaped in turn by their actions, practices, and traces of lives lived and left behind. Country, culture, and territory illustrate tangible, recognisable frames of reference to explain and articulate place. Less apparent are the multitudinal fragments, traces, etchings, and mutual imprints that people and places leave upon one another that are beyond immediate grasp.

This research project has been about capturing that indefinable something by bringing together stories and resonances – mine, my places, places in me, and many physical, virtual, metaphorical, and memorial places of life. This study was nurtured by many inputs – my background in tourism studies and its disciplinary pathways, my eclectic reading habits, Nigel Thrift's lecture on place and non-representation, Edward Casey's books that captured and resonated with my own thinking and philosophy, the field site that slowly but surely revealed its richness behind the apparent ordinariness, and the people who readily shared their place stories.

The process of carrying out the field work was hugely influential in driving the project along, shaping the study, defining its parameters, clarifying objectives, and positioning researcher standpoint and reflexivity. The daily struggles of carrying out empirical work and the loneliness of the research endeavour shaped me into a strongly critical reflexive researcher. Empirical data drove me to read and think more. The longer I remained in the field site in the company of people, the greater clarity I gained from seemingly everyday occurrences

and innocuous moments. Participating in celebrations or routine kitchen activities, watching people pray, garden, cook, count rosaries, play bingo, record expenses, slice vegetables, or simply sit in silent companionship, I recognised common patterns of human emotions, feelings, and practices that bound together people and place.

In the process, little memories became significant, meaningful resonances of place, action, and habit – reading under the ancient banyan tree of Adyar Theosophical Society, quiet contemplation in Oxford's Bodleian, a lifelong passion for Agatha Christie's Miss Marple and her formidable ability to unlock mysteries by teasing out universal patterns of human experience from the most obscure of details, my own constant search for place and its meaning in life and work, situating myself within the academic community, finding my personal space and voice.

From these multiple, formative influences, I drew fragmentary threads of ideas that brought the study together. My fascination with place was fed and enriched by eclectic, wide-ranging, interdisciplinary reading habits, but upon reflection was conceptually impoverished by the paucity of theoretical grounding within the areas and disciplines of my everyday work. My interest in people and lives made me gravitate towards ethnographic storytelling rather than hypothetical constructions as a means of excavating their richness. My nomadic, itinerant, immigrant experience shaped largely by urban living drew my interest towards everyday ordinary actions and practices rather than the spectacle of aesthetics and identity. These seemed more authentic and real to me than artificial reification of symbolism and tropes. I remained curious about how people and place came together to make and recreate one another. And I returned time

and again to the philosophical, spiritual, and cosmological underpinnings of place based on my readings as well as my personal experiences.

These influences have evolved into a critical interest in examining place, how it is situated within marketing sensibilities, and how it can be understood as a process rather than a finished product. Accordingly the aim of this research study is to theoretically interrogate “place” in marketing and consumption with a view to conceptualising it from a practices standpoint. To support this aim, key objectives are developed and addressed throughout the rest of the study, roughly aligned with each of the chapters: to (a) critically examine extant treatments of place in marketing and social sciences literature so the theoretical gap informing the study can be framed; (b) rationalise a phenomenologically sensitised street ethnography as placemaking practice and empirical method; (c) analyse the validity of practices and non-representational methods as empirical tools in deconstructing and reconstructing ethnographic place; (d) validate and evaluate the relevance of practices in positioning and conceptualising place within consumption; and (e) critique and empirically validate resituated place ontology and hierarchy in consumption.

The study undertakes a circular journey, starting with examining place in managerial sciences, and returning to it after an ethnographic exploration through multiple disciplinary, empirical, and phenomenological pathways. The study commences by examining place treatments in managerial and social sciences, further exploring inspirations from philosophical and phenomenological musings on place. Following an ethnographic empirical interrogation of place through many spatial-temporal contexts, the study progresses through gradual processes of synthesis, analysis, theorisation, and

conceptualisation, before it draws to a conclusion by summarising the theoretical, methodological, and axiological contributions and implications arising from the study. Accordingly the structure of this research study is organised as follows.

Chapter Two addresses study objective (a) to critically examine extant treatments of place in marketing and social sciences literatures in order to frame the theoretical gap informing the study, and outlines the **Literature Review** divided into two parts. The purpose of the literature review is to critically review multidisciplinary inspirations underpinning the study, and frame its contours so the theoretical gap can be framed and situated in extant scholarship.

Following a short introduction, **Part One** of the literature review titled **Place in Marketing**, examines place treatments in marketing and managerial scholarship. Place in marketing is typically understood as one of its mechanisms, interpreted as servicescapes and retail settings which act as backdrops to marketplace exchanges, or commonly shopping-based consumption behaviour. The review outlines managerial understanding of place as servicescapes from non-interpretive perspectives which view them as settings engineered and designed to maximise marketer control and manipulation over consumer, and interpretive perspectives which understand them as subjective sites of exchange mutually negotiated between various marketplace actors. The review also examines treatments of place as product-commodity, involving goods, services, experiences, spectacles, tourism, and urban centres, and addresses the packaging, branding, and marketing as place. A critical take on this review focuses place as an object of contemplation

in mainstream marketing scholarship, within the broader phenomenon of consumption, and helps frame a dialogue around extant gaps, unquestioning assumptions, and underlying predispositions around the construct and interpretation of place.

Part Two of the review titled Place beyond Marketing, contextualises this dialogue by drawing from social sciences disciplines that interrogate place, space, and the social, examining connections between spatialized societies and territorialized cultures, and their changing understandings in world transitioning into postmodernism. Inspired by the works of philosopher Edward Casey, the review then takes a markedly phenomenological turn, and proceeds to historically trace the genesis of place thought and its ontological construction vis-à-vis space through pre-modern and modernist philosophies. It questions the underlying assumptions behind space-place hierarchy and looks towards habitus and practice as alternative means of thinking and contemplating place.

Phenomenological contemplation draws in practices and non-representational theories to examine means of linking place with self and affect. Practices are situated centrally in understanding the processual nature of place, contextualising it within consumption, and used as a heuristic in empirically examining place. The review wraps with making a case for framing place as unit of observation, practice as unit of analysis, non-representational theories as explanatory mechanisms, and ethnography as methodological approach and placemaking practice with which to empirically interrogate place in the context of consumption, positioning it on curve traversing phenomenological to post-phenomenological narratives.

The chapter originates in marketing and consumption disciplines and branches out towards recognising and building strategic relationships with potential interdisciplinary allies from cultural and human geography, sociology, cultural anthropology, as well as philosophical and phenomenological musings of place. It addresses the first of the study objectives and situates place as an object of contemplation within a gap in extant scholarship that can be theorised beyond geography, virtuality, and metaphor.

Chapter Three addresses study objective (b) to rationalise a phenomenologically sensitised street ethnography as placemaking practice and empirical method, and outlines the **Methodology** of the research study, its approach and design, and outlines the rationale for a phenomenologically sensitised ethnographic research approach, thus addressing the second of the study objectives. It introduces and positions an adapted form of street ethnography as empirical method, placemaking practice, and a reinvigorated critical epistemic tool of knowledge production. The chapter discusses the historic antecedents of street ethnography as a popular urban sociological tool to examine hidden and marginal populations, and outlines its epistemic adaptations for purposes of this study, the range and scope of its methodological toolkit, the empirical data set, and rationale behind field site choice and context. The methodology also weaves in a critical reflexive standpoint as a continual iterative dialogical process through multiple stages of data collection, iteration, synthesis, analysis, and writing up.

The field site for this study is Belgrave Road, a mile-long road on the outskirts of Leicester. Nearly seven years of ethnographic work was carried out in this

site, on the road and surrounding areas. Belgrave Road can be considered a representation of many things place – a collection of servicescapes and retail settings as in marketing; a commodity of urban history packaged, branded, and marketed to prospective stakeholders; a construct that is shaped in and through stakeholder power interactions; a geography and territory that is perceived beyond its site and contours; an object that is shaped by the actions and practices of people who live and pass through it; and a metaphorical representation of any 'place' that can be perceived and conceptualised as a composite of actions and practices beyond its physical contours.

The methodological adaptation and reinvigoration of historic street ethnography positions it as a newly innovative empirical method to interrogate place in its many forms as an object of consumption within marketing scholarship. In addition by positioning it as a critical reflexive epistemic tool of knowledge production, the methodological approach of street ethnography and its deployment in studying place can also be conceived as a unique empirical method that marks a transition to post-critical, post-phenomenological themes and narratives through practice and non-representational that frame the units of observation and analysis.

Chapter Four presents the empirical work as both process and product and addresses study objective (c) to analyse the validity of practices and non-representational methods as empirical tools by deconstructing and reconstructing the field site as an ethnographic place through these standpoints. Titled **Ethnography and Placemaking** it outlines the spatial-temporal and lived-practiced place in two parts.

Part One titled Site Space and Place unpacks the field site as historic, imagined, and cartographic place through space and time.

Part Two titled Stories from the Street is a themed collection of meta-narratives that bring together multiple stories and voices presented as mundane, everyday practices that represent the universality of human life experiences. These six tales frame the dialogue between units of observation and analysis in how place and practice shape one another.

Chapter Five builds on the ethnography to construct an explanatory framework of themed practices as scaffolding, progressing through gradual stages of synthesis and abstraction of empirical data towards theorisation and conceptualisation. It addresses study objective (d), to validate and evaluate the relevance of practices in conceptualising place as a theoretical object of consumption, and partly study objective (e), to critique and validate a resituated place ontology and hierarchy through its conceptualisation within consumption. The **Analysis and Discussion** chapter is titled **Place as an Object of Consumption** and is divided into two parts following a short introduction.

Part One titled Practices Body and Place unpacks the phenomenology of place and its coeval relationship with body through explorations of habitus, non-representations, and practices as bodily enactments performed through an assortment of phenomenological registers coloured by multiple shades of affect. Through various sections, the analysis progresses through stages of understanding the mutual internalisation of body and place, and relationships between place and practice. Place and practice are seen to affect and shape

one another in a mutual texturing, through multiple spatial and temporal dimensions. This dialogue is contrasted with key ideas outlined in the earlier literature review which juxtaposes empirical evidence against the shortcomings, assumptions, and generalisations affecting extant scholarship through a series of conceptual bridgeheads.

Part Two titled Protean Practices Transcendental Place consolidates this synthesis proceeding towards abstraction. This section not only situates place as a gathering of practices textured by them through a continual process of somatography and eventuation but also consolidates the ontological hierarchy place as a universal abstract distinct from its co-constitutive elements of space and time, thus resituating and validating its hierarchical position.

In a circular bid to close the loop, the discussion moves forward from philosophical and phenomenological moorings towards drawing on from key points of dialogue in the literature review, from place treatments in social sciences to managerial sciences and marketing and consumption to revisit extant understandings. Place is linked to practice and consumption, examined and interrogated through the limiting lens of marketplace logic and is conceptualised as an object of consumption enacted in and through moments of practice.

The final **Chapter Six** titled **Conclusions and Contributions** summarises the research journey, recaps the conceptualisation and theorisation of place as an object of consumption formed, shaped, and affected through practices, and highlights some of the theoretical, methodological, and axiological

contributions arising from the study by wrapping up the study objectives and addressing the remaining study objective (e) to validate the resituated place ontology and hierarchy and its new conceptualisation within consumption.

The conceptualisation highlights the underappreciated nature of genomic practices, brigaded through the universality of human experiences, as the pool of actions and competencies that shape place. It emphasises the illocutionary force of place as an object of consumption shaped through and in each moment of practice, and also deconstructs its ontic nature of being constitutive of space and time as component elements.

This chapter highlights the distinct **contributions to knowledge** emerging from this study. The ***methodological contribution*** is derived from positioning a reinvigorated street ethnography as a critical reflexive epistemic tool of knowledge production to study place. The ethnography, its process, and methods of analysis traverse a line towards post-phenomenological analysis of place in the context of consumption, not knowingly done before, much less one applied to marketing scholarship. It extends disciplinary boundaries in the study of consumption by inviting practice and non-representational theories into management sciences and also opens up place as an object of inquiry in its many forms for further theorisation and empirical validation.

The study makes a number of ***theoretical, discipline-specific contributions*** to examinations of place, consumption, practice, and non-representational theories. It demonstrates and validates the use of non-representation to interrogate place as a unit of observation, as a tool of data collection, analysis, synthesis, and interpretation as post-phenomenological meta-narratives. It empirically validates the use of practice theories in examining place, linking it to

the phenomenon of consumption, and theorising it. Shortcomings in extant marketing understandings of consumption and place, their staticity and one-dimensionality, are exposed against empirical evidence. The interactive and interpenetrative nature of place, practice, and consumption developing against complex socio-historic forces and spatial-temporal frameworks are illuminated. The linking contribution also offers a valid counterpoint to extant presentism found in scholarship, suggesting future pathways for research.

The study expands place as a unit of observation by introducing a processual, aspatial, fluid approach to observing it as an entity beyond immediate marketplace logic. Through the lens of practice, the study expands understanding of marketplace, setting, structure, and actor, and invites attention to the liquefied, flowing nature of market and consumption through place plasticity and path-dependent practice. This highlights some of the fallacies and underlying assumptions of isomorphic thinking in managerial sciences around place. The study empirically validates the reenchanting ontological hierarchy of place and space, restructures its extant hierarchy, repositions place as the universal supreme, co-constituted through space and time, opening up a range of possibilities of place observation. It also opens up further possibilities for contemplating place in its many forms beyond geography and territory by examining it as a processual object that is shaped in the way it is made and practiced.

The study's ***axiological and managerial contributions*** are derived from added clarity to marketing treatments of place construct, and underlying assumptions in managerial sciences. Attention is drawn to hidden and grey spaces within settings, their role in shaping the marketplace, valorisation of

everyday activities and mundane practices whose genomic qualities recast market structures wherever they travel, and mould humans into complex marketplace actors beyond simple shopping-related consumption. The study also highlights the importance of settings not always captured by marketplace discourses such as public, civic, and communal spaces, their position and role in the transition from a market economy to marketized society, the mutability of practices in shaping spaces, market place settings, urban town centres, ethnic neighbourhoods and streets, beyond territories, identities, and cultural traps through everyday human actions. It expands the possibilities of multiple contemplations of place as objects and spaces of consumption beyond settings of marketplace exchange and builds bridges with cultural and social understandings of consumption that are often neglected by mainstream research.

The chapter highlights some implications for methodological, theoretical, and axiological place discourses in mainstream managerial sciences, consumption scholarship, and renewed understandings of practice and non-representational theories.

II. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study is undertaken with the view to revisit and re-examine concepts of space and place within marketing and consumption. This literature review undertaken in two parts, outlines and frames intentions behind the research objectives of the study. The chapter seeks to address the first of the research study objectives, to (a) critically examine extant treatments of place in marketing and social sciences literature so the theoretical gap informing the study can be framed. Accordingly the literature review aims to critically review place treatments in extant marketing scholarship as a marketing mechanism, a setting of negotiation and control between marketplace actors, a site for enactment of marketplace exchanges, and an object of commodification. The review then opens up the discussion by inviting ideas from interdisciplinary perspectives and scholarly allies, which allows for contextualising the gap and shortcomings in place, and lays the ground for framing a gap for conceptualising place in consumption.

Part One focuses on treatments of place in mainstream marketing scholarship where it is understood as one of the foundational pillars in marketing practice, conceptualised and examined as channel and distribution system of goods and services which consumers can access. Its origins are traced to distribution sites and settings and historical developments lead towards services marketing in which literature place is addressed as retail or service setting within which environment marketing encounters and marketplace exchanges happen.

Drawing from broader disciplinary perspectives, servicescape literature has evolved in addressing retail settings as complex spaces, engineered and designed for exercising maximum managerial control over optimising consumer behaviour. Non-interpretive research approaches focus on servicescapes as environments controlled and manipulated by marketers for their influence on consumers, while interpretive approaches adopt a more experiential, subjective view of the nature of the marketplace, consumer agency, and the servicescape as site of exchange negotiated between marketplace actors.

Moving on from place as distribution, the review also highlights place as product-object-commodity involving goods, services, experiences, and spectacles. Drawing from place marketing, tourism, and urban studies, the review addresses the reimagining of places as objects and commodities that are branded, packaged, and marketed.

Contrasting approaches between non-interpretive and interpretive research streams on servicescapes and scholarly treatments of place as object frame the dialogue on place treatments in mainstream marketing literature. It also serves to highlight some of the key epistemological, ontological, and axiological gaps in understanding the nature of place, epistemological approaches, and unquestioned ontological assumptions behind place construct, the constraints around understanding marketing against the broader phenomenon of consumption, and the axiological gaps that remain unexplored.

Part Two of the review examines relations between place, space, and the social, tracing the history of place genesis from modernist philosophies through to postmodern disruptions. A philosophical turn then draws

extensively from works of philosopher Edward Casey, in a phenomenologically sensitised examination of place, and proceeds to outline a means of examining place by linking concepts of place, self, affect, and practice.

The review situates the centrality of practice in understanding the processual nature of place, followed by a discussion of the complex nature of consumption, and how practices informed by affect can be a valuable heuristic tool in the empirical examination of both concepts. Non-representational theories are discussed as a basis to present practices and lay the foundations for an immersive, phenomenological ethnography as preferred method to unpack place and consumption as a precursor to the methodology chapter. The discussion wraps an overall view of this study traversing a phenomenological to post-phenomenological curve in its research approach and positionality.

I. PLACE IN MARKETING

Place as Servicescape

In traditional marketing literature, the concept of place has typically been treated within the precincts of the 4Ps framework, as one of the four core elements that make up the marketing mix (Borden 1953, 1964). Place represents the third P of the mix, synonymous with channel or distribution, conceptualised and operationalised as the conduit for facilitating consumer access to goods and services within marketing practice. It is synergistic with understanding channel mechanisms including distribution elements, ambient structures, transport, logistics, inventory management, and supply chain processes that support access. The conventional understanding of place therefore is that of a setting or a context where marketing practice fulfils its purpose of satisfying consumer needs and arrives at its logical conclusion.

Understanding place as a setting for marketing and consumption contexts means that place treatments in marketing literature have been exemplified and dominated by readings on physical environments such as retail settings and related contexts within which consumption takes place. Discussions on place are often synchronous and associated with distribution settings and channels. Retail stores and similar settings are seen to facilitate consumer interactions with marketer-produced goods and services and are typically marketer-dominated environments. They provide marketers with ample scope for optimising favourable consumer behaviour through their manipulation of place

settings and atmospherics. Consequently marketing literature has drawn and continues to draw extensively from perspectives on semiotics and environmental psychology among others to explore and understand the role and importance of place in enhancing the marketing and consumption experience. The growth and development of literature in areas of retail and services marketing have enriched knowledge on retailing and store atmospherics and their influence on consumer shopping behaviour from both interpretative and non-interpretative paradigmatic perspectives.

The growth of services marketing as a research domain (Kotler 1973) established scholarly interest in place and retailing, reflecting an attendant shift in mainstream marketing practice from products to include services and service experiences and the related growth of the services sectors. Scholarly interest in services marketing was strengthened immensely by the conceptualisation of 'servicescape' a term coined by Booms and Bitner (1981) to indicate the actual physical service environment as the loci for assemblage and delivery of services, "*the environment in which the service is assembled and in which the seller and customer interact...*" (*ibid*: 36). As the context or setting within which the marketing and service process unfolds, the servicescape is not only the site of consumption but is also inclusive of "*tangible commodities that facilitate performance or communication of the service*" (*ibid*). The tangible and often intangible commodities are integral to the ambient atmosphere of the servicescape or the landscape where marketing products and services are accessed by the consumer.

Booms and Bitner's (1981) conceptualisation of place as servicescape was initially done in the context of the hospitality and leisure industry but has since expanded to include any type of service setting, where a consumption process or experience unfolds, and is articulated, perceived, and understood as part of marketing practice. In acknowledgement of the importance of retailing in marketing, servicescape predominantly indicates retail and retail settings. Marketing literature has paid a lot of attention to retail atmospherics within such servicescape settings. Place or retail atmospherics are constitutive of a multitude of tangible and intangible attributes ranging from functional-utilitarian to aesthetic and intangible features that aid, enhance, and optimise consumer experience and consequently desirable shopping behaviour. Typically these features can encapsulate elements of interior design such as décor, lighting, ambient temperature, scent, music and sound, colour, and other aesthetics, elements of service including parking, display, aisle layout, navigation, flow, entry-exit points, semiotic codes, signs, symbols, printed literature, signage, service indicators such as employee uniforms, help desks etc., and the generic ambience of pleasing functionality and overall experience. Together these elements are often considered part of 'physical evidence' which along with 'process' and 'people' extend the traditional 4Ps to a 7Ps marketing mix, specifically developed to capture the complexities of services marketing (Booms and Bitner 1981).

The extended marketing mix allows marketers greater control over some less controllable elements of services that distinguish them from products but in practice are often subsumed under the catch-all term of 'place'. Thus servicescape is conceptualised and understood as the landscape, a canvas

upon which all the tangible and intangible ambient elements are superimposed and controlled, to create a positive shopper experience, optimise consumer and shopping behaviour and decision making. Servicescapes are also the most visible and tangible articulation of physical evidence of place as an element of the marketing mix.

The importance of retail atmospherics and their constituent elements in servicescapes have enriched marketer understanding and emphasised greater managerial control of such elements in optimising the consumer shopping experience. Consequently the design and planning of servicescapes have focused on engineering, monitoring, measuring, evidencing, and optimising various elements so as to heighten the sensory experience of shopping and stimulate consumer spend within retail and store settings. Servicescape literature has followed suit and draws extensively from environmental and cognitive psychology among others to understand the materialities of retail atmospherics and the manipulation of tangible and intangible cues to assess the efficacy of marketing performance and service processes (Berry and Parasuraman 1991). Such materialities are also communicated to customers through emphasis on servicescape design (Eiglier and Langeard 1987) and other store attributes such as layout and functional aesthetics.

Earlier works in servicescape literature have focused greatly on aspects and methods by which marketers can understand and in turn manipulate aspects of the physical retailing environment and exercise greater managerial control over the design and execution of servicescapes so as to maximise shopping experiences. Paradigmatic perspectives drawn from traditional Stimuli-

Organism-Response discuss consumer responses to stimuli within a physical environment and have emphasised how such carefully manipulated environments can influence consumer behaviours and emotions (Lazarus 1991, Mehrabian and Russell 1974) and in turn can be managerially controlled. Cognitive psychology has made one of the largest contributions to early servicescape literature in discussing the causal effects of various atmospheric elements and their tangible constituent components of physical design on eliciting desirable consumer responses and examining their roles in shaping customer beliefs about the desirability of products and services on offer within said environment (Rapoport 1982). These desirable responses in turn feed into managerial decision making and control as managers introduce more measurable, controllable elements into the design and physical environment of the servicescape to optimise shopping by orchestrating a range of atmospherics, cognitions, emotions, moods, sounds, and even scents and smells (Bitner 1992, Chebat and Michon 2003, Lin 2004, Mattila and Wirtz 2001, Turley and Milliman 2000).

Establishing causal relationships between specific aspects of store design such as colour, ambient temperature, lighting, and floor layout, and positive shopper behaviour has highlighted the importance of design features and store environment, as well the potential for increased managerial control over servicescapes so as to manipulate consumers. Increased control over design features, layout, atmospherics, and other material dimensions of the store environment help emphasise the importance of place as a concept reflected in and articulated as servicescapes, which in turn has supported a huge growth in servicescape literature particularly from non-interpretive perspectives. Literature

drawing from design and environmental psychology have impacted greatly upon marketing practice and in the growing importance of design and planning of store environments which stimulate shopping related consumption activities. As organised retailing spreads around the world through globalisation and growing consumerism, servicescape literature contributes to greater understanding of in-store consumer behaviour, offers great potential for implementation in practice, and has come to represent the most tangible elements of place in marketing scholarship.

From early days of being conceptualised in marketing literature, the notion of servicescape has expanded considerably to draw from disciplinary perspectives adjacent to cognitive psychology in order to enrich understanding of the nature and role of the physical environment and the reaction and responses of consumer behaviour within such settings. Although the store environment and design stimuli continues to be an important area for store designers and planners, there has also been growing attention to consumer responses and the nature of customer-store interaction within such settings. Ecological perspectives for example examine the servicescape or store environment as a habitat within which consumers seek to adapt their consumptive behaviours as a response-adjustment mechanism reflected in their shopping patterns (Bloch, Ridgway and Dawson 1994).

Servicescapes are also examined as a discursive environment replete with symbolic language and communication, the environment itself perceived as an object language mediated by consumers engaging in non-verbal forms of communication such a shopping related discursive interaction (Broadbent, Bunt,

and Jencks 1980, Ruesch and Kees 1956). Perspectives from semiotics and examination of the importance of signs, signage, and codes within a retailing environment have been very important in understanding customer navigation of in-store design and have often informed the design and layout of hypermarkets (Floch 1988) in which consumers play out mundane, utilitarian, and sometimes unattainable fantasies through their shopping behaviour. The semiotic construction of retailscapes in addition are seen catalysing multiple consumer fantasies and roleplaying and help understand the servicescape's symbolic significance in people's lives.

Early developments in place literature in marketing have emphasised servicescapes but this development has not been without its criticisms or shortcomings. Despite the original framework developed by Booms and Bitner (1981) and the slow but steady expansion of literature to incorporate disciplinary perspectives in plugging original gaps, the understanding of servicescape was predominantly that of a spatialised service model. It was comparatively slow to shift from a physical construct to one that was more cognisant of social and human factors and the role of the consumer in constructing and interpreting the environment around them (Baker 1987).

Servicescape literature from this time is found to be excessively interested in the physical space at the expense of focus on agentic roles of consumers and is seen to overlook the recognition of shoppers as individuals. More importantly servicescape literature from this time also overlooks shoppers as individuals with particular socio-historic contexts in their treatment of servicescapes as social settings. The overemphasis on design and aesthetics to the exclusion of

social factors in servicescape literature means that consumers are often treated as anonymous, ahistorical individuals and stores as colourless, monolithic spaces that seemingly influences everyone that walked through their doors in similar ways (Chin 1998).

The focus on store design and its causal effects on influencing and pre-determining shopper behaviour meant that dominant aspects of servicescape literature privileged the needs of managerial controls of service environments, often ignoring the social and leisurely dimensions of shopping as a communal, recreational activity. In some instances the overt emphasis on managerial manipulation of store design and controls and its causative effects on influencing shopper behaviour was actually perceived to be detrimental to the social nature of shopping. It was seen to turn the customer-environment interaction into a confrontational exercise rather than as an interaction between individuals of particular socio-historical contexts and spaces, "*when people are repeatedly reconstructed as particular people in that place*" (Chin 1998: 612). Effectively this is a critique of the dominance of managerial controls on shopping environments to the neglect of the social aspect of shopping.

Although not without merit, these criticisms have gradually been addressed with the expansion of servicescape literature throughout the late 1990s with the inclusion of a greater number of social and cultural perspectives and a growing contribution from interpretive research perspectives. The influence of adjacent disciplinary perspectives in environmental psychology, human geography, and sociology and from the broader social sciences have enriched social, symbolic, ecological, environmental, and cultural perspectives in understanding

servicescapes. There has been a significant shift in place and retailing literature from the servicescape being a mere construct towards a more socio-physical environment, examined from socio-systemic perspectives that combine social and physical dimensions in impacting consumer and shopping behaviour (Baker, Levy, and Grewal 1992; Baker, Grewal, and Parasuraman 1994). There has been a determined attempt to examine not only the impact of individual environmental elements such as colour and light and floor layout on shopping behaviour but also the overall holistic sensual impact of the built environment and the atmosphere it creates on influencing consumers (Turley and Milliman 2000).

The concept of place as representative of the shopping environment and the context of consumption behaviour has helped extend servicescape work on behavioural settings (Barker 1986; Cantor 1986). Some investigations into crowded retail environments for instance have addressed the collective elements of shopping and shopping behaviour and attendant emotional and behavioural responses among shoppers (Bateson and Hui 1987; Bitner 1992; Eroglu and Machleit 1990; Eroglu, Machleit, and Davis 2003; Hui and Bateson 1991; Machleit, Eroglu, and Mantel 2000). The development of servicescape literature has enabled an extended understanding of the servicescape construct and the types of behaviours that are enacted within.

The service environment itself is increasingly framed around contextual, physical, and social elements, transforming a shopping landscape into a social-servicescape, the “*setting in which the customer purchases or consumes the service*” (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy 2003:448). By expanding the premise of

what constitutes a servicescape there develops a greater understanding of the social servicescape as defined not only by external cues and constraints but also through social meaning. The setting itself is seen to imbue the act of shopping with social meaning that attaches itself to the reason, purpose, and rationale behind enacted shopping behaviours. This has led to an evolved and a more nuanced understanding of the interactions between the customer and shopping environment, not from a previously confrontational standpoint but more as a subtle negotiation of a mutually shared space, still dominated and controlled by managerial interventions but increasingly interpreted and shared in by consumers.

Such literature has been enriched from dimensions of the physical (Bitner 1992), social and sociological (Berry, Carbone, and Haeckel 2002; Rosenbaum and Montoya 2007; Tombs and McColl-Kennedy 2003) and symbolic (Hightower, Brady, and Baker 2002, Proshansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff 1983, Rosenbaum 2005). It includes interesting insights into how consumers negotiate social standing and positioning through shopping behaviours such as affiliation, dissonance, and avoidance mechanisms (Stokols and Shumaker 1981). It also provides a more nuanced understanding of the intricacies of consumer-environment interaction that affect consumer sensory responses and satisfaction (Rosenbaum 2009a, 2009b), the influence of natural stimuli (Rosenbaum, Sweeney, and Windhorst 2009), sensory and emotional stimuli (Underhill 1999), and a range of other cues that affect consumer responses (Fiore and Kim 2007, Turley and Milliman 2000).

Retail settings and stores are seen to communicate a range of complex verbal and non-verbal cues and messages which are used in turn by consumers as symbolic resources for various purposes. Servicescape environments are seen to help consumers construct and mediate their ethnic identity (Kleine and Baker 2004, Proshansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff 1983, Rosenbaum 2005), collective social identity and sense of belonging (Baumeister and Leary 1995), transform impersonal stores into personalised communal spaces (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002), and use them to avoid personal loneliness and alienation (Forman and Sriram 1991). Shopping is no longer simply a utilitarian activity designed to satisfy functional needs but also a symbolic activity in that it services and supports multiple identity projects.

Servicescapes become increasingly socially constituted as a site of collective social activities, and therefore consumers exercise greater freedom in enabling the servicescape to make sense of who they are (Dixon and Durrheim 2004), using it as a catalyst to construct a congruent self-place identity (Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995, Miller, Jackson, Thrift, Holbrook, and Rowlands 1998). The result is a greater, richer, and enhanced understanding of retail servicescape as a complex environment combining natural, social, symbolic, and ecological contexts (Rosenbaum and Massiah 2011) and this literature continues to evolve and grow with further potential for enrichment and development (Ezeh and Harris 2007).

While expanding the notion of place in marketing, albeit within and as enriched, complex consumption settings and contexts, servicescape literature has also been impacted by two parallel, interrelated, and sometimes intersecting developments in contemporary society and culture which have in

turn influenced the development of mainstream marketing. The spread of postmodernism and the emergence of a postmodern society has had a significant and critical impact on understanding the role of marketing and consumption in mainstream society and has inspired the gradual emergence and growth of an interpretive body of scholarship that drew from broader disciplinary perspectives to highlight more subjective aspects of the consumption experience and consequently servicescapes.

Postmodernity signified a condition of change or state of being in institutions and creations (Giddens 1990). It was a sweeping aesthetic, creative, artistic, literary, social, philosophical, and intellectual phenomenon that had wide ranging impacts on late 20th century Western societies. Postmodern society focused on and was indeed predicated on the notion of spectacle, a form of drama or theatre replete with music, entertainment, aesthetics, and information flows (Debord 1967, 1977).

Relatedly, works by poststructuralist thinkers (Deleuze 1997, Derrida 1967, Foucault 1966, Lacan 1977, Lyotard 1984) drew attention to the importance of signs and symbolism and was concretised further by works on signification (Baudrillard 1988, 1994, Boorstin 1992). Baudrillard, drawing inspiration from the works of Bataille 1988 and Barthes 1968 undertook somewhat of an anthropological commentary on signs and signification where meaning and its creation became self-referential. Society was in a constant quest for self-referentiality based on people's inability or unwillingness to distinguish between real and imitation, authentic and simulated.

This resulted in a gradual effacement of reality, the enhancement of hyperreality or a simulated version of reality that society was drawn towards (1994). Baudrillard focused on consumerism and consumption rather than production as the drivers of society, where the act and phenomenon of consumption held social significance for the consumer and the consumed. Concepts of identity and fetishism of the consumed object or experience were core in postmodern thinking. Theming, spectacle, and simulation were central to human experience and global society itself was seen as a vast engineered Disneyfied version of reality coloured by pastiche and play (Bryman 2004, Kehoe 1991, Zukin 1996).

The spread of postmodernism and the emergence of a postmodern society has had a significant influence on mainstream marketing and consumption literature and is evidenced most greatly in the development of scholarly perspectives in postmodern marketing (Brown 1995, Cova 1996, Firat and Venkatesh 1995, Firat, Dholakia and Venkatesh 1995). Postmodernism highlights the pre-eminence of consumption and a materially determined consumerist society where consumers attempt to negotiate, construct, and interpret their own reality amidst the confusing assaults of de-differentiation and hyperreality (Baudrillard 1994, Lyotard 1985; Maffesoli 1990).

The postmodern turn in marketing has embraced the notion of consumption as an endless quest to seek evermore experiences mediated through shopping behaviours and consumption of not just products and services but increasingly experiences. The postmodern consumer seeks out new experiences not only for consumption but also for constructing and

interpreting their own reality through such consumption experiences.

Consumers begin to assume a more significant role as “*participants in an ongoing, never-ending process of construction that includes a multiplicity of moments where things are consumed, produced, signified, represented, allocated, distributed, and circulated*” (Firat and Venkatesh 1995: 259). This means that the consumer is now centrestage of their own consumption experiences and processes and plays a greater agentic role in customising their personal world of meaning making.

The repositioning of consumers as agents and participants in their own consumption experiences embraced several related developments.

Postmodern society emphasised and increasingly underpinned the rise of an experiential economy (Pine and Gilmore 1998), fuelled by an explosive growth in shopping and consumption behaviours that sought maximum pleasurable experiences combining sensual atmospheres and aesthetics. The consumer was portrayed as a hedonist; the pursuit of experiences and the embedded principle of hedonism motivating all of their behaviours including consumption (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Hirschman and Holbrook 1982). The combined influence of postmodernism, the expanding consumerist economy, experiential society, and the challenges posed by the hedonist consumer and their unceasing demand for pleasurable experiences resulted in a huge growth in experiential marketing. This branch of marketing emphasised the marketing of experiences as well as the importance of experiences in marketing with added emphasis of aesthetics to the original marketing mix in the form of properties, products, presentations, and publications (Schmitt and Simonson 1997, Schmidt 1999).

The influence of these developments was felt in servicescape literature as well. Servicescape environments increasingly focused on the spectacle and the spectacular. Themed environments with emphasis on aesthetics and atmospherics became important. Shopping was an experience in itself, an act of religious communion with the spirit of materialism and consumerism. Shopping malls and retail environments were iconized as 'cathedrals of consumption' (Ritzer 1999, 2007). The shopping environment or servicescape was a site of hyper-consumption, enchanting and seducing consumers into believing that shopping will change their lives for the better. Apart from having significant implications for marketing communication and branding, this also had a great impact on the design and engineering of retail sites and servicescapes.

Greater attention to environmental psychology and human geography in servicescape and retail design resulted in the inclusion of built environment components that facilitated greater marketer-consumer interaction. Servicescapes were able to combine functional efficiencies with a range of aesthetic, architectural, and design elements (Moles and Rohmer 1982 cited in Borghini et al 2012). Retail settings gradually became sites where not just functional and utilitarian, but also hedonistic behaviours were enacted (Arnolds and Reynolds 2003; Babin, Darben, and Griffin 1994; Donovan and Rossiter 1982). The servicescape as an articulation of the idea of place in marketing, as an environment that facilitated access to marketing artefacts was gradually growing and evolving in theory and practice into a more complex and enriched environment than originally envisaged in marketing literature.

Alongside changing practices in design, servicescape literature also evolved in tandem, reflecting the changing nature and dimensions of shopper behaviours enacted within servicescape environments. This was also reflective of broader socio-cultural changes whose impact was increasingly being felt in mainstream marketing literature. These changes helped expand the understanding of the servicescape construct which in turn reflected a slow but steady expansion in the underpinning notion place in the marketing mix.

Place, articulated as servicescape, treated in the context of a retail setting, was still predominantly considered a distribution channel and site for accessing goods and services. However there was a perceptible shift towards treating the servicescape with a more nuanced approach that was cognisant of the site as a holistic environment of the physical, environmental, ecological, social, and symbolic. The design, execution, and engineering of the retail servicescape environment was still within the domain of managerial-marketer responsibility to be manipulated for the creation and expression of enchantment and pleasure but there was a notably growing emphasis on the importance of aesthetics, atmospherics, and spectacle within retail environments. The servicescape site was now a place of leisure and pleasure in itself, designed to capture and stimulate the enchantment of shopping, the act of which was imbued with joy and happiness beyond the material achievement of goods and services. The types of behaviours enacted within such settings were also increasingly examined as an embodiment of functional, utilitarian, and hedonistic behaviours.

Research showed increasing awareness of what consumers did within servicescapes, how they responded and reacted to environmental stimuli, how they proactively exercised ownership of spaces and constructed their own meaning and experience through gestures, movements, and assorted spatial and physical practices. This also expanded room in servicescape literature for adjacent disciplinary perspectives as research sought to move slightly away from an obsession with managerial dominance and control towards more focus on consumer agency. Multidisciplinary perspectives for example from anthropology (Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf 1988), ecology (Bloch, Ridgway, and Dawson 1994), sociology (Aubert-Gamet and Cova 1997, Goodwin 1994), and semiotics (Floch 1988) provided a new understanding of consumer behaviour beyond shopping enacted within servicescapes.

Empirical methods were still dominantly within the positivist paradigm, treating environmental variables as causative factors in influencing shopper behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions. However in keeping with the post-positivist turn in epistemology across broader social sciences and the tentative embrace of socio-cultural perspectives in mainstream marketing scholarship, research on servicescapes began to be more inclusive of interpretive, subjective methods such as ethnography in examining all aspects of human agency in consumption, not just shopping. The understanding of consumption itself was broadened from mere goods and services to be more inclusive of experiences, sought to be understood as a collaborative effort of co-producing meaning through the consumption process as a set of interactions between marketer and consumer (Askegaard and Kjeldgaard 2002, Caru and Cova 2007, Holbrook 2007, Venkatesh and Meamber 2008).

These changes have contributed to an immensely rich and vibrant body of place, retail, and servicescape scholarship in the last few decades within marketing largely drawing from interdisciplinary perspectives and interpretive methods. Within this body of work, place is still treated as servicescape and examined within the context of conventional retail settings but there is a noticeable broadening in the variety of marketplace settings, contexts, and environments addressed, not just large retail stores.

Alongside, attempts to theorise the nature of marketplace-consumer interaction have involved returning consumer agency to the forefront of research through the clever use of interpretive methods and subjective empirical approaches to understand consumer responses to aesthetic stimuli as well as their engagement with marketplace culture. Interpretive research on servicescapes seeks to expand and enrich the understanding of consumption beyond simple acquisition and possession of material goods and privileges understandings of human interaction with the marketplace.

The interpretive body of work on servicescape environments has expanded scholarship along a number of lines of enquiry around servicescape contexts, settings, and nature of behavioural actions and interactions enacted within and against such settings. Research has focused on attempting to understand the *genius loci*, the underlying atmosphere or pervading spirit of assorted servicescape settings ranging from the formal to informal, synthetic, natural, and virtual. The type and nature of retail settings has tended to focus typically on conventional sites like flagship brand stores and malls such as Nike

(Peñaloza 1998, 1999, Sherry 1998), American Girl (Borghini, Diamond, Kozinets, McGrath, Muniz, and Sherry 2009; Diamond, Sherry, Muniz, McGrath, Kozinets, and Borghini 2009), ESPN Zone (Kozinets, Sherry, De Berry-Spence, Duhachek, Nuttavuthisit, and Storm 2002; Kozinets, Sherry, Storm, Duhachek, Nuttavuthisit, and De Berry-Spence, 2004), and Louis Vuitton (Joy, Wang, Chan, Sherry, and Cui 2014).

Away from such settings, research has also addressed small, atypical, unconventional, and more intimate servicescapes which are just as meaningful and important. These range from gift stores (McGrath 1989, Sherry and McGrath 1989), (Wallendorf, Lindsey-Mullikin, and Pimental 1998), bridal salons (Otnes 1998), and barber shops (Alexander 2003) to more unconventional and atypical settings such as flea markets (Sherry 1990a, 1990b), buyer-seller swap meets (Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf 1988), and farmers' markets (McGrath, Sherry, and Heisley 1993).

In recognising that consumption extends to scenes and sites of spectacles as well as any setting that facilitates consumption of experiences, studies have examined servicescapes as theme parks (O'Guinn and Belk 1989), cattle shows, trade shows, and rodeos (Peñaloza 2000, 2001) and extended the understanding to sites of nature, environment, and adventure from river rafting (Arnould and Price 1993) to surfing (Canniford and Shankar 2013). Beyond the physical, studies address the virtual and remembered including cyberspaces (Houliez 2010) and retrosapes (Brown and Sherry 2003, Goulding 2000) and in a rare attempt to examine place beyond the

commercial marketplace logic, an inclusion of street art and public space (Visconti, Sherry, Borghini, and Anderson 2010).

The expanding range and variety of servicescape settings studied in literature in the context of interpretive research has highlighted their growing nature as increasingly complex environments beyond the immediate logic of the marketplace and a site for shopping behaviours. Many of the servicescapes examined are still predominantly retail settings, explicitly synthetic, manufactured, marketer-dominated environments, carefully designed, planned, and engineered to stimulate and optimise acquisitive and possessive consumptive behaviours mediated through the act of shopping. Nevertheless these environments are also settings for the interactions and enactments of multiple social, cultural, symbolic, and ideological perspectives.

These interactions are largely facilitated by the spectacular nature of the servicescape or consumption environment that allows and enable consumers and shoppers to engage in a collaborative process of meaning making. This means a renewed focus on consumer agency following on from the reflective, interpretive turn in consumption research particularly in the context of servicescapes. This stream of research humanises the consumer-shopper as co-participants and collaborators in the process of constructing their own meaning through the use of tools provided by marketers. The consumer is no longer a passive instrument to be manipulated by marketer strategies; instead they use their own imagination and creativity, interact with servicescape environments through movement, play, practices, and gestures, and reconstruct their own shopping experience within a marketer-controlled domain. They do this through a range of interactions from socialisation to cultural

appropriation, ideological turn, symbolic play, self-expression, and corporeal movements to exercise ownership and control over the servicescape environment in reconstructing their own shopping experience.

Research suggests that consumers extend the idea of socialisation through shopping, transforming servicescape environments into intensely social spaces by engaging with its social dimensions (Johnstone 2012). They enact cultural and ritualistic practices of sacrifice, symbolic exchange, and reciprocity through their enactment of shopping behaviours in gift stores (Sherry and McGrath 1989) and gift registry retailers (Bradford and Sherry 2013).

Consumers display little acts of subversion in appropriating the physical environment of servicescapes such as banks to exercise feelings of possession and cognitive ownership (Aubert-Gamet and Cova 1997). They carve out personal micro-spaces through a combination of tangible and intangible nesting practices (Borghini, Maclaran, Bonnin, and Cova 2012) as they seek to build a uniquely ritualistic sense of place and investigate the rest of the environment for potential social-exchanges. Even within a rigidly controlled marketer environment, they extend their personal stamp through physical gestures and movements as they use the human body as a mechanistic tool in moving through space (Berthelot 1995, Fischer 1992). They enact such appropriation and ownership practices in hotels (Bardhi 2006), coffee shops (Waxman 2006), and even on public transport (Pareigis, Echevarri, and Edvardsson 2012). It enables consumers to construct a sense of 'third space' (Soja 1989) and develop place attachments to spaces they consider personal such as

bookshops (Laing and Royle 2013) and coffee shops (Tumanan and Lansangan 2013).

The most creative aspects of consumer agency however are evident within spectacular retail environments which are carefully themed and designed to enhance and magnify the lifestyle experience of consumption in the modern marketplace through special attention to aesthetics, architectural elements, visual displays, and design. The aestheticisation of the retail environment is deliberately designed to heighten and intensify the physical and sensory dimensions of experiential consumption and elicit the maximum emotional, experiential, and cognitive responses from consumers.

Flagship brand stores and malls for example (Borghini et al 2009, Diamond et al 2009, Peñaloza 1998, 1999, Sherry 1998) are museums embodying and reflecting corporate reputation, exemplified by brand values and lifestyles, and imbued with the symbolisms of cultural meanings and brand ideologies. Their aesthetics and atmospherics draw liberal inspiration from mythology, folklore, and fantasy, and are designed to enrich, intensify, and enhance sensory stimulation, to be venerated as art institutions (Joy et al 2014).

Shoppers within such environments imbibe, internalize, and re-enact these brand values and ideologies through their own images, recreating fantasies and reshaping them in their own desires through shopping. Spectacular themed environments (Kozinets et al 2002, et al 2004) in particular are shaped as liminoid zones as consumers engage in ludic activity, themselves becoming part of the spectacle and consumed experience of the servicescape. Shopping malls

undergoing transformation are conceived of as utopian spaces of pastoral, therapeutic care (Maclaran and Brown 2005, Sandicki and Holt 1998) through consumer-marketplace interaction and paying homage to idyllic spectacular nature within urban precincts (Wilson 1992).

Such complexities are enacted not only in retail environments but also in other types of spectacular consumption environments. The overall setting, in addition to being a site for economic exchanges and marketplace, is also repositioned as a centre of cultural production that shapes new marketplace meanings beyond commercial brand ideologies and myths. It becomes a site of cultural ideologies where the Wild West is mythologised in cattle markets, trade shows, and rodeos (Peñaloza 2000, 2001), American heritage is enshrined in memory (O'Guinn and Belk 1989), the Mountain Man myth is revived and re-enacted in the Rocky Mountain American West (Belk and Costa 1998), the industrial Victorian past is paid homage to through nostalgia (Goulding 2000), and the Nevada desert becomes an expression of radical sentiments in consumption through the Burning Man festival (Kozinets 2002).

The servicescape is now not merely a static entity; it becomes an active catalyst in arbitrating fantasies, providing consumers escapism from commercialisation, and a crucible for consumer participation and resistance to corporatisation (Thompson and Arsel 2004). It facilitates consumer construction and expression of identity through the engineered environment, sometimes cutting across online and offline realities into cyberspaces (Houliez 2010, Schau and Gilly 2003).

Interpretive research seeks to highlight the overall atmospheres of such servicescape settings where the boundaries between retail and spectacle blur, satisfying cravings for both commodity and entertainment. The atmosphere is theatrical; consumption is a performance enacted by consumers who channel their own fantasies through material manifestations of consumption that transcends mere shopping and acquisition, and fulfils deeper needs of leisure, entertainment, and ideology. The servicescape becomes a setting or dual landscape of retail and spectacle (Gottdiener 1995, 1997, 2000), of interchange between leisure and commerce, a liminoid zone for social and exchange nexus (Chaney 1990). By facilitating enchantment, fantasy, cultural meaning, and even religious fervour, the new spectacular servicescape fosters a dyadic relationship between marketer and consumer.

This stream of research aligns itself neatly with broader developments in postmodernism, illuminates and reflects postmodern condition of hyperreality and spectacle where carefully themed servicescapes with their exaggerated, stylistic, and theatrical displays encourage consumers to participate and perform in the retail spectacle (Deighton 1992). This idea of servicescape and retailing as theatre extends beyond retail settings and is increasingly evident in spectacular malls, play zones, theme parks, adventure settings, and cineplexes, constituting 'theatres of consumption' (Kowinski 1985) or indeed 'cathedrals of consumption' (Ritzer 1999). In these settings the marketplace is constantly performed, enacted, and constituted through consumption (Hopkins 1990) inasmuch as they are dedicated to the production and consumption of spectacle through their rich use of visual imagery and offer of plentiful experiences that drive the experience and hedonistic consumption economy (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982, Pine and Gilmore 1997).

While interpretive research on servicescapes have done signal service in positioning consumer agency at the forefront of understanding servicescapes, there is also much debate around the ideological nature of consumer-marketer interaction in and against such settings. The increasing dominance of themed and spectacular retail environments and the rapid growth of organised retailing around the world are evidence of growing marketer power and control over marketing processes. The careful orchestration of atmospheric and sensory stimuli designed to overload consumer senses are indicative of a broader aestheticisation of marketing and retail practice over the last few decades (Biel-Missal and Saren 2012, Venkatesh and Meamber 2008, Wagner 2000) as well as consumption spaces. Consumer experiences within such spaces are largely mediated and negotiated as a series of aesthetic, sensory responses to stimuli (Fiore and Kim 2007, Underhill 2004), seductive store environments (Böhme 2006), and sophisticated retailing atmospheres (Dennis and King 2007).

These aestheticized servicescapes catalyse intense embodied consumer experiences (Korczynski 2005) but have often been perceived as causing gradual passivity and subjectivity in consumers who willingly acquiesce to marketer dominance. Servicescapes such as flagship brand stores and themed malls for example are specifically designed to promote spectacular consumption and they inspire awe and enchantment in consumers. Marketers are able to orchestrate seductive multisensory experiences which physical and emotional impact, consumers absorb and internalise within these environments. The

control exercised by marketers over the design of such servicescape atmospheres seduce, manipulate, overpower, and often subjugate consumers, and coerces them into evermore shopping and excessive consumption (Deighton 1992, Deighton and Grayson 1995, Peñaloza 1998).

Consumers are unable to resist the onslaught of multiple physical, visual, acoustic, olfactory, tactile, and aural impacts offered as part of the aesthetic atmospheres of retailscapes. These spaces are seen to subjectivise consumers, reconstruct them as aesthetic subjects, obliging them to participate in an aesthetic and consumption economy in which affluence is a stress and extravagance becomes duty (Biel-Missal and Saren 2008, Venkatesh and Meamber 2008). The manipulation of consumers can also be more subtle as servicescapes are recast as spaces of peace, enchantment, joy, harmony, utopia (Maclaran and Brown 2005, Murtola 2010) and religious enchantment (Ritzer 1999) evoking evangelical responses among consumers.

This leads to perception that servicescapes and other spectacular consumption environments are deliberate instruments of manipulation, playing into the hands of marketers through institutional controls, providing consumers with the illusion of autonomy, freedom of choice, and the promise of a better life through consumption, allowing them to indulge, re-imagine, and interpret themed atmospheres in their own liking as they seek to shop and consume and play out their fantasies.

The reality is that these seductive atmospheres hide the exploitation that is consumerism (Böhme 1993, 1995) likened to Weberian cages (Ritzer 1999).

They are heavily policed by technologies that watch, observe, and restrain consumers while providing them the illusion of freedom of play, cast in the mould of Foucauldian panopticons. Worse, the seemingly liminal characteristics of ambiguity and disorientation prevalent within such environments (Van Gennep 1960, Turner 1967) while strengthening marketer actions, is seen to infantilise and regress consumers to play states.

The result is the creation and sustenance of the 'surveillance-entertainment complex' (Thrift 2011) that reshape consumer subjectivity according to marketer desires. This standpoint in research suggests that marketer-orchestrated aesthetics from simple signage, merchandising, promotion, and branding to overall spectacle and atmospherics are carefully manipulated experiential paths replete with structural controls that are intended to elicit consumer responses and reactions and that the only choice available to consumers is to either be subjected to such manipulation or to take evasive or resistance action. It indicates a dualistic tension between consumer agency on the one hand and sign-dominated structural ways in which marketers seek to control servicescapes, and hints at a somewhat adversarial relationship between both marketplace actors.

An emancipatory strand of research provides a more optimistic, liberatory counterpoint to this rather bleak view of marketer-consumer interaction within the servicescape environment (Firat and Venkatesh 1995). Here consumers either seek to escape the market completely (Belk and Costa 1998, Kozinets 2002) or attempt to renegotiate the terms of their marketplace participation on a more equal basis (Kates 2002, Peñaloza 1999). Consumers are neither passive

recipients nor subjects of marketer interventions. Instead they seek to negotiate the boundaries of their participation and limits of agency by attempting to shape the marketplace to their own desires through a dialogical process of appropriation and interpretation of cultural meanings within different domains of consumer culture (Ritson and Elliott 1999, Thompson and Haytko 1997). They exercise active resistance, evade, subvert, and even sometimes collude with marketers to attain and strive for marketplace emancipation (Grayson 1999, Holt 2002, Kozinets et al 2002, et al 2004).

Although they dislike and resist the dominant influence of hegemonic retail atmospheres (Thompson and Arsel 2004), they do sometimes adopt a conciliatory stance while accommodating marketer-controlled atmospheres (Peñaloza 1998, Sherry 1998b) and actively co-produce the spectacle they are consuming through their roles as ludic agents engaging in playful behaviours (Belk 2000, Kozinets et al 2004), becoming part of the spectacle they seek to enact through their own bodies and experiences.

The co-produced spectacle or environment thus becomes a liminoid space richly endowed with marketer-provided elements, referents, and resources that consumers can draw upon, stoke their creativity, draw from personal and collective references, creative imagination, and labour (Goulding 2000, Kozinets et al 2004, Peñaloza 1999, Sherry 1998) and project associations and meaning (Caru and Cova 2006) in reimagining the servicescape in line with their own immersion experience. The marketer-consumer interaction is not entirely dichotomous but more of a dialectic interplay between consumer agency and marketer structure (Murray 2002), a middle ground that is constantly negotiated.

This standpoint indicates that the servicescape as marketplace and spectacular consumption environment is indicative of a more dialectical negotiation between a marketer, sensitive to consumer agency, and informed consumers, more proactive in their own consumption experience (Toffler 1980) rather than being viewed through extreme lenses of marketer-dominated and controlled spectacles or subjective and passive consumer acquiescence.

This brief overview above highlights research perspectives on servicescapes from non-interpretive and interpretive strands in marketing. Both research streams are parallel, complementary pathways of gaining a more rounded understanding of place as it exists within marketing theory and practice. It is notable that place as one of the foundational pillars of marketing, is still predominantly conceptualised, understood, addressed, and examined as channel, distribution, locale, site, or setting in which the marketing process of facilitating consumer access to goods and services, and increasingly experiences, happens. Place is often synonymous with the location of consumption, a backdrop against which marketing activities take place and consumers behave in pre-determined or unexpected ways and therefore any discussion on place as a construct immediately gravitates towards discussions on servicescapes and retail settings.

From theoretical standpoints non-interpretive research on servicescapes relies more on cognitive and environmental psychology perspectives as it focuses on causal behaviours and human responses to psychological articulations of environment. Empirical methods are underpinned by this approach and findings from research increasingly feed into implications for marketing practice as

marketers seek to improve design processes of servicescapes, optimise consumer behaviours within, and structure them as central to the experience of a consumer economy as it spreads rapidly around the world.

Interpretive research on servicescapes on the other hand is more accommodating of consumer perspectives as it draws from the broader social sciences and humanities from sociology and anthropology to geography and philosophy in examining not only the site and setting of consumption but also the role, importance, and nature of consumer agency. Empirical methods privilege the subjective consumer voice and their immersive experiences, and seek to sensitise marketer understanding around personal consumer meanings and processes of meaning making.

Between both paradigmatic perspectives, research seeks to examine place in the context of a retail setting, understanding what it means, how it can be measured, manipulated, and engineered, and what sort of consumption activities and experiences it facilitates. It attempts to understand and interpret consumer actions and the underpinning ideologies that animate meaning making. It views place as being symbolic of a multidimensional marketplace structure and addresses how place as a complex environment and a site for goods and services and experiences is negotiated, constructed, and navigated by all marketplace actors. It illuminates the power dynamics and ideological struggles that animate all consumer-marketplace interactions although research has come a long way from the early days of literature when the marketplace was a scene of dialectical consumer-marketer tensions (Sherry 1990a) towards

considering it as a holistic, multifaceted site for spectacle and consumption of experiences.

Despite their apparent differences in addressing servicescapes however, both strands of research demonstrate remarkable similarities in their method of examining the underlying construct as place. Across both research streams there is still a strong and marked inclination towards understanding place within the constraints of being a setting for marketing-related activities, and more frequently those activities which fall under a narrow definition of marketplace exchanges.

Place in marketing is still synonymous with a servicescape, an environment that is typically inseparable from location, and marketer-consumer interactions are still viewed through the logic of the marketplace, evident either in transactional exchanges and shopping related behaviours or in richer consumption experiences. Place is still a marketplace landscape, a static and somewhat neutral setting or backdrop against which consumption takes place and interactions are negotiated between consumer agency and marketplace structures. Place is aligned to cartographic space, a territorial built environment that causes and influences consumers to react and respond in certain ways, a setting or juncture where marketplace and consumer cultures interact.

Some recent calls in research suggest a greater need to examine place as a locus of power or intersection between dimensions of the marketplace and consumer culture and scholars have called for greater studies of both places AND what consumers do in them (Hirschman, Ruvio, and Belk 2012, Miller

2007, Peñaloza 2006, Sherry 2000). These calls however are still grounded within the commercial logic of the modern marketplace and mainstream place literature seems somewhat distanced from attempts to strengthen their philosophical foundations (Lynch 1982, 1983) and grounding in broader social sciences (Belk 1975, Frenzen and Davis 1982) much less examine them within their broader social setting.

Some peripheral studies not central to marketing indicate a greater importance to place than hitherto suggested in mainstream literature. These include the relationship of servicescapes, retail environments and consumption settings on national policy (Creighton 1992), situational and social relationships in neighbourhoods and communities (Nochis 1994, Sack 1992), and as a mediator of collective social identity and seasonal behaviour in social and communal gatherings (Heisley et al 1991, Hodder 1994).

Conceptually, the idea of place is still encapsulated and somewhat ossified as a static entity, its dimensions captured as a snapshot in the here and now with little or no understanding of how it evolves and is consumed in itself. The advent of postmodernism, the broader impact of post-industrialisation in Western societies, and their reinvention as consumption- rather than production-driven societies has to some extent been reflected in studies that examine servicescapes as sites of enchantment and spectacle and have served the trend of studying place constructs as commodities. Peripheral areas of literature that are tangential to mainstream marketing and consumption address some aspects of treating place as commodity to be objectified, constructed, marketed,

and branded for consumption as marketing vocabulary goes mainstream into other aspects of public life.

Place as Product-Commodity

In treating the concept of place as the distribution element of the marketing mix, research has sometimes focused on servicescapes as a setting for experiences, constituting it as a commodity to be considered an object of consumption. While servicescape literature itself commodifies aspects of nostalgia, history, and heritage, a peripheral stream of literature from place marketing and branding addresses how place itself is commodified and marketed as a product. Under this line of enquiry, place is still cartographic, but territorially boundaried, defined, packaged, promoted, marketed, and branded as objects.

Place commodification and marketing literature draws its contextual inspirations from historical (Olins 1999, 2002, 2003), socio-political (van Ham 2001), sociological, and nationalistic (Bond et al: 2003) perspectives and its theoretical inspirations from the shift to and application of product marketing and branding to non-profit and social contexts (Kotler and Levy 1969, Kotler and Zaltman, 1971). Its practitioner inspirations and imperatives draw from nations and cities competing for economic advantages in times of post-industrial decline and the economic necessities of survival in a competitive marketplace, by shifting from administrative to entrepreneurial forms of governance (Barke 1999, Goodwin 1993, Hannigan 2003, Harvey 1989, Hubbard and Hall 1998). In repositioning themselves as societies of consumption, country-blocs, nations, states, regions,

and cities have competed for economic advantage, objectifying and marketing their propositions along geo-spatial and territorial lines down to the granular level of suburbs, streets, and neighbourhoods.

Early perspectives of place promotion and marketing are to be found in the context of cities and urban spaces with their origins in objectification and commodification (Ashworth and Voogd 1988, 1990a, 1990b, 1994, Bassett 1996, Gold and Ward 1994, Hall and Hubbard 1998, Kearns and Philo 1993, Paddison 1993, Short and Kim 1999). With the influence of marketing vocabulary, the discussions eventually lead to theming and branding of place 'products' (Kotler, Haider, and Rein 1993, Kotler, Asplund, Rein, and Haider 1999) and treatments of place such as nations and cities as branded objects (Gnoth 2002, Kavaratzis 2005, Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005, Morgan and Pritchard 2002, Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott 2002, Papadopolous 2004, Papadopoulos and Heslop 2002, Iversen and Hem 2008).

In the cartographic alignment of place as territorial object, place marketing literature originally evolved in the context of urban spaces and cities and has eventually scaled up to include nations and countries, taking shape as nation or country branding (Anholt 2005, Dinnie 2004) where nations are marketed for political advantages and positioning (Olins 2002), attracting inward investment, visitors, and residents (Kotler et al 1999, Kotler and Gertner 2002, Morgan and Pritchard 2002), and countering negative objectification (Gilmore 2002).

Alternatively they have scaled down to the level of regions, states, cities, for similar reasons.

Practitioner frameworks for nation branding (Anholt 2005) and city branding (Anholt 2006) have also have given rise to significant consultancy enterprises as nations and cities become more market-savvy and the fine lines between diplomacy and public relations begin to blur. With minimal theoretical underpinnings but enormous practical implications for territories that would like to reimage and reposition themselves in a fast-changing world order, this body of literature is replete with case studies, successful or otherwise, of places that have been commodified, branded, and marketed along various territorial scales.

These include country blocs (Hall 1999), nations and countries (Damjan 2005, Dooley and Bowie 2005, Domeisen 2003, Endzina and Luneva 2004, Florek 2005, Gilmore 2002, Hall 2002, Lodge, 2002, Martinovic 2002, Morgan and Pritchard 2002, O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2002, Ooi 2004, Pant 2005, Pritchard and Morgan 1998), regions (Crockett and Wood 1999), towns (Kerr and Johnson 2005), cities (Cheng and Taylor 2007, Hankinson 2001, Kavaratzis 2004, Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005, Nobili 2005, Parkerson Saunders 2005, Trueman, Klemm, and Giroud 2004, Virgo and De Chernatony 2005, Yeoh 2005) , city-states (Beaverstock, Smith, and Taylor 1999, 2000, Haila 1999, 2000, Kenney 2000, Kotkin 2005, Low 2002, Meyer 2000, Newman and Thornley 2005, Olds and Yeung 2004, Sudjic 1993, Yeoh 2005).

In considering the place-construct applied to geographical-territorial contexts as multidimensional objects with complex product structures and multiple place-products on offer, place marketing and branding literature often borrows inspiration from similarities in corporate branding scholarship (Balmer and Greyser 2002, 2003, Knox and Bickerton 2003, Kavaratzis 2005, Virgo and De

Chernatony 2008, Kavaratzis 2009), drawing attention to the synergistic nature and roles of governments and corporations (Olins 1999). Just as corporate branding highlights the softer, more human face of corporations (Hatch and Schultz 2001) emphasising their symbolic, experiential aspects (Caldwell and Freire 2004), place branding especially in nation contexts also highlights the importance of national diplomacy, reputation, and public management initiatives (Anholt 2008) in building marketing appeal. The neglect of such initiatives is seen to trigger a backlash that may adversely affect not only the marketing of the place brand but also that of its various component place products (Anholt 2008, Dunn 2004, Fraser 2009, Hassan 2001, Mihailovich 2006, Wang 2006).

The peripheral area of place marketing literature with its emphasis on objectification and commodification of place as brand, has contributed some way to thinking of place as object, although the place-object has been indirectly addressed in many related streams of scholarship. These areas focus on tourism, exports, sports and culture etc. which are individually considered as place-products in a collective place brand.

In tourism literature for instance, there exists a vast body of scholarship around tourism destination marketing, considered one of the place-products in place branding thinking. Place as a tourism destination receives comprehensive attention for its symbolic, cognitive, affective, and personality attributes (Baloglu and Brinberg 1997, Baloglu and McCleary 1999, Buhalis 2000, Crompton 1979, Dann 1996, Ekinci and Hosany 2006, Gross and Brown 2006, Gunn 1972, Hosany, Ekinci, and Uysal 2006, Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001, Kim and Richardson 2003, Ritchie and Crouch 2003) and even for some of its more

visceral sensory aspects (Dann and Jacobsen 2003, Sliwa and Riach 2012). In areas of international marketing, place is often used as a signifier in establishing brand identity for exports related to its country-of-origin and a vast body of literature addresses this comprehensively (Jaffe and Nebenzahl 2001, Laroche, Bergeron, and Goutland 2003, Papadopoulos and Heslop 1993, Thackor and Lavack 2003, Shimp, Samiee, and Madden 1993).

Place as a tangible source of origin lends symbolic provenance to the products being exported and marketed through intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Bilkey and Ness 1982, Erickson, Johansson, and Chao 1984; Eroglu and Machleit 1989).

Place associations lend halo effects, allow consumers to make general inferences about product quality through symbolic associations with a place (Johansson, Douglas, and Nonaka 1985), such as expertise (Han and Terpstra 1988), culture (Lim and O'Cass 2001), and even draw upon country stereotypes (Thackor and Katsanis 1997) in making decisions. Place- and country-of-origin treatments crystallise the concept of *genius loci* of territories and cultures embedded within them, making it easy to draw inferences about place-objects.

Other practical applications include marketing places as property investment (Haila 1999, 2000), higher education (Hayes 2007, Helgesen 2008, Rotfield 2008), economic and business clusters (Colloredo-Mansfield and Antrosio 2008, Kasabov and Sundaram 2013, Maskell and Lorenzen 2004, Montana and Nenide 2008, Parto 2008), and technology hubs (Angel 2000, Kenney and von Burg 2000). Places are branded and marketed as sites of sporting prowess (Allison and Monnington 2001), and excellence in event hosting capabilities (Berkowitz, Gjermano, Gomez, and Schafer 2007, Brown 2002, Jun and Lee

2007). They are branded and highlighted for their favourable governance structures and processes (Cohen and Fields 2000, Putnam 1993) and language supremacy (De Swaan 2001). Places have multiple product offers, enabling marketers to leverage their respective individual strengths, structure them within an architectural hierarchy, and commodify place as an umbrella construct, drawing inspiration from corporate umbrella branding areas (Iversen and Hem 2008), and cross-leveraging the brand equity amongst place-products.

Critics of place branding literature highlight practical and theoretical complexities in objectifying and commodifying territorial entities and communicating them to internal and external audiences (Davidson 2006).

Difficulties include overwhelming practitioner dominance, weak theoretical underpinnings, indistinguishable differences between place and tourism branding, distractions of cosmetic promotions, regressing into superficiality, lack of clarity about place 'ownership', and blurred boundaries between branding place and any of its place products (Dinnie 2004).

From the discussion above, it is evident that place is treated within one or other of the elements of the marketing mix, as servicescape, distribution channel or product, or commodity-object, to be constructed, packaged, and sold to a suitable audience as a site for goods and services or spectacles or as a tangible commodity in oneself. Epistemologically they are heavily influenced by marketplace vocabulary including theming, promotion, communication, branding, sloganeering, and symbolism. They often conceptualise place as a

static, deterministic given, a space of production resident within the commercial logic of the marketplace with little or no attention to its underlying theoretical construct, much less for its ontological form or processual nature.

As with many other objects of inquiry within marketing scholarship there runs a deep schism between non-interpretive and interpretive approaches to understanding servicescapes. The former is still dominant in exploring aspects of consumer behaviour as a set of cause-effect outcomes while the latter with its focus on more subjective experiences gradually risks being relegated to the periphery of scholarly inquiry. Interpretive research has contributed to broadening the understanding of marketing processes beyond shopping and have attempted to focus on some aspects of the broader consumption phenomenon but is still preoccupied with consumer cultural approaches (Arnould and Thompson 2005) without venturing beyond to explore phenomenological understandings of consumption much less that of place. Furthermore marketing scholarship appears reluctant to engage with treatments of place outside of the strict logic of marketplace much less with its understanding across broader social sciences where more meaningful explorations of place are to be found.

The impact of postmodernism and post-industrial changes on socio-economic structures across Western societies has facilitated a gradual repositioning of places from being spaces of production to one of consumption and this has been particularly evident in the marketing of cities and urban spaces as they have sought to reinvent themselves over the last three decades. As part of an attempt to combat the effects of post-industrial decline and with a view to embracing the free market spirit, many cities and urban spaces have used

public expenditure to regenerate and revamp their position as new places of competitiveness (Zukin 1991).

In marked contrast to statist, interventionist forms of town, regional, and urban planning, cities have embraced marketplace logic and marketing vocabulary, and adapted urban regeneration and gentrification to re-image urban economies (Ashworth and Voogt 1994). Socio-cultural changes in Western societies and attendant trends in urban lifestyles have seen a rapid transition from a fairly stable status (Weber 1946) to a more aggressive pursuit of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984), stimulating spending on cultural products and revitalising service, leisure, and cultural industries. Consumption is no longer a residual category of the urban political economy but the constitutive landscape of urban spaces and 'symbolic economy' (Zukin 1991, 1995, 1998) repositioned as centres of cultural consumption to attract a mobile public, their material and symbolic fabric altered and reinvented as sites and settings for shopping, retail, leisure, and entertainment.

Servicescape literature and retail marketing is closely connected to studies of urban shopping centres (Dennis 2009, Dennis, Marsland, and Cockett 2002) which are liminoid zones of play and leisure, both destinations and objects of consumption (Warnaby, Bennison, Davies 2005) and also to studies on out-of-town retailing centres (Borgers and Vosters 2011, Dennis 2005, Lowe 2005, Teller 2008). Disciplinary practitioner antecedents of place marketing are also evident in these studies that examine places in the context of town centres as destinations of both business and leisure (Bennison, Warnaby, and Pal 2010, Oakes and Warnaby 2011, Ward 1998, Warnaby 2009a, 2009b, Warnaby, Bennison, Davies and Hughes 2004, Warnaby and Davies 1997). The

similarities are because these bodies of work draw from the same sensibility of sites being settings for consumption and centres for spectacle, leisure, and entertainment and the general preoccupation with atmospherics and aesthetics.

The influence of marketing principles and practices is also seen in the design of urban town centres, the gradual rise of anodyne, generic 'Tesco Towns' with a homogenised architecture and predominance of retail chain store, whose projected standardised aesthetic and consumption experience makes them more marketable to a mass visitor and shopper audience. Policy makers and practitioners are enamoured of town centres as centres for retailing and shopping and focus their energies on revitalising the high street (Portas 2011) despite the explosion in online shopping, changes in the nature of shopping, and the struggling fortunes of the high street (BBC 2013).

Some rare studies in marketing draw attention to urban micro-spaces and commodification in the context of gentrification (Ilkucan and Sandicki 2005) or neo-bohemian, cultural enclaves (Ozalp and Belk 2011) that straddle the divide between mainstream and alternative marketplace and creative consumption. Such studies however privilege the presentation of an aesthetically revamped picture of urban regeneration that requires both participant and audience to be of a certain postmodern creative class and to possess a certain economic and socio-cultural capital to be appreciative of such presentations.

The richness of modern urban landscapes and the melting pot of urban demographics however are not to be reflected in either generic town centres or in gentrified bohemian enclaves but in culture-specific enclaves and

neighbourhoods which bring together multiple marketplace and consumer cultures. These spaces are largely made up of migrant communities adapting to a new life in host societies, sometimes after fleeing painful histories from elsewhere. As they settle and build a new life in a new country, their habitats begin to take on and project cultural and social identity and promote a sense of home away from home. This reimagining sometimes shapes the modern urban built environment and its architecture through its places of worship, ethnic restaurants, grocery stores, and other settings as little *ethnoscapes* (Appadurai 1997), playing host to fellow ethnics who visit for family reunions, shopping, gatherings, festivals, and native cuisine, as well as visitors from the host society who travel to acquire new, exotic, cultural experiences closer to home.

As marketers, town planners, policy makers, and local authorities begin to recognise the commercial possibilities of such ethnic enclaves, these places also become commodified, marketed, packaged, and sometimes branded, their cultural and ethnic characteristics highlighted through events, festivals and such, exoticised to benefit the visitor gaze (Urry 1990) and to tout the effects of multiculturalism.

Ethnic neighbourhoods and enclaves help reimage and exoticise the city while helping develop niche markets for leisure and tourism visitors (Shaw 2011). These micro-places make strong contributions to the richness and diversity of the urban landscape (Barth 1994, Collins and Kunz 2009, Erdentug and Colombijn 2002, Selby 2004, Urry 2002) whose socio-cultural, economic, and civic health is often linked to the overall success of ethnic neighbourhoods (Pryor and Grossbart 2005). They perform an important socio-cultural and

economic function by promoting small family businesses and enterprises, embedding capital in local areas, widening tax bases, generating employment, and fostering greater local ties and communal engagement. They constitute interesting urban visitor attractions, spatialising the commodification of ethnic diversity (Light and Gold 2000, Rath 2000, 2006) into precincts.

Over time these neighbourhoods become cultural resources comprising a reconstructed ethnicity and staged authenticity (MacCannell 1973, 1976, 1999) made up of culture-specific signs, symbols, and spectacles. As exotic enclaves, they are perfect representations of postmodern spaces in that they demonstrate a fundamental ambiguity and contradiction between culture-rich authenticity and its faux historicisation through a sanitized or pastiche form of nostalgic design (Bryman 2004, Meethan 2001) thus lacking in credibility. There is also the danger of exoticisation veering too far into Disneyfication (Judd 1999), resulting in stereotyping and ghettoisation of enclaves (Spina 2001).

In showcasing areas of exotica including disadvantaged neighbourhoods, marketing risks cashing in on the attractions of repulsion (Hoffman, Fainstein, and Judd 2003) by fetishising poverty and danger (Shaw, Bagwell, and Karmowska 2004) to sate the needs of 'danger travel'. Similar to the commercial tensions that occur between the old and new in the context of gentrification, the commodification of ethnic neighbourhoods can also deepen local alienation (Shaw and MacLeod 2000) through the reinforcement of cultural stereotypes (Orbasli 2000) which are often exacerbated through the ebb and flow of migrant communities and attendant changes in the built environment and

neighbourhoods as a reflection of changing power dynamics between stakeholder communities.

The gradual commodification and marketisation of neighbourhoods, cities, regions, and countries, and all other places along spatial-territorial lines, serves to highlight not only the commercial possibilities of such commodification but also tensions inherent in the encroachment of marketplace into public spaces and collective socio-civic resources. Public spaces perform a wide range of physical, ecological, psychological, economic, political, socio-cultural, symbolic, and aesthetic roles. They embody sacred, higher order values (Montgomery 1995), function as channels of communication across movements of material objects, architectures, peoples, and information (Carr, Francis, Rivlin, and Stone 1992, Gehl 1996), serve and meet a diverse set of daily activities (Czarnowski 1982, Moughtin 1999), act as sites of socialisation across private-commercial and public-civic arenas (Akkar Ercan 2007), and become strategic planning instruments in the marketing of localities (Madanipour 2000).

With greater exposure to the pressures of the marketplace, the interpenetration of private-public space (Boyer 1993, Loukaitou-Sideris 1988, Punter 1990), divisions between what is public and what is commercial, and the boundaries between private and collective, shared ownership begins to blur and sometimes confuse (Clarke and Bradford 1998, Cook 2008, Visconti et al 2010). This highlights the potential for greater appreciation of place as an object of study in mainstream marketing to include perspectives on consumption, thus expanding its scholarly reach as the world rapidly transitions from being a market economy to a greatly marketised society.

Pause for Thought

From the preceding overview it is apparent that within the domain of marketing as a management science, place as an object of study still remains firmly resident as theorised by marketer practice rather than be informed by the phenomenon of consumption. Place is still conceptualised and understood as a marketing mechanism as one or more elements of the marketing mix. As a distribution channel or conduit, it is understood as a site or setting or location of goods, services, and increasingly experiences, accessed and shared by consumers through the mechanisms of marketplace exchange.

Marketer interest is almost solely confined to gaining insights on how to optimise and engineer the site and experiences within, from perspectives of control and structural mechanisms. Agency perspectives either from non-interpretive research that examines marketer actions or from interpretive research that examines consumer actions cast both marketers and consumers in roles of marketplace actors, their actions pressed into service to augment the nature of the marketplace exchange played out within the dominant logic of market capitalism.

Place as locale also morphs into another element of the marketing mix as product-object, to be commodified, packaged, and marketed in order to facilitate and optimise marketplace exchanges and territorial advantages. The commonalities across both approaches are underpinned by the given that place is synonymous with site and understood as a tangible, scalable, cartographic

territory. Accordingly research remains preoccupied with epistemic understandings of site, activities happening within, elements of site that lend to identification, signification, objectification, packaging, and branding, and their suitable fit with broader marketing narrative and vocabulary.

Beyond epistemic treatments there is a distinct lack of perceptible effort in extending epistemological, ontological, and axiological enquiries of place. Epistemological works across non-interpretive and interpretive marketing scholarship rarely talk to one another. Research still privileges positivist, non-interpretive approaches that examine causal relationships between site and behaviour in understanding place as a servicescape or object and ways of optimising its individual elements and overall role in the consumer experience. Interpretive research that attempts to examine more subjective perspectives drawing from broader disciplinary underpinnings across social sciences, are typically relegated to a narrow selection of supportive publishing outlets such as *Journal of Consumer Research* and *Consumption Markets and Culture*. Works that appear under the domain of consumer culture theory that privilege cultural approaches are under growing pressure to justify their 'value' for marketing. The dichotomous nature of empirical approaches to examining place leaves little room for a more multi-dimensional interrogation of the underlying construct within marketing literature.

While place studies are largely confined to and preoccupied with epistemological understandings, there are next to no ontological examinations of the nature of place much less phenomenological interrogations of lived places within mainstream marketing scholarship. In its automatic understanding

of being a servicescape or commodity, place is almost always treated as a cartographic given, a deterministic assumed territory of space, with examinations adopting a snapshot approach of the here and now.

Few studies in marketing scholarship adopt processual approaches examining how places come into being and how they evolve and there are rare, if at all, studies of places beyond the cartographic including virtual or natural, thus making temporal enquiries of place even rarer. Within mainstream marketing scholarship one finds some marginal acknowledgement of the evolving nature of place as a palimpsest of vivified contours and dynamics (Sherry 2000) and as a rich and complex socio-cultural field and text (Warner 2002, Wright 2002) but this is rarely put to the test. The preferred approach is in static treatments of place as a site of marketplace exchanges that IS, not one that becomes or comes into being. The paucity of enriched spatial and temporal inquiries of in marketing hinders its ontological development and also impedes a richer and deeper examination of place within the broader consumption literature.

Marketing practice around the world has rapidly expanded to embrace a range and variety of consumption settings and contexts in keeping with the trend of a marketised society. The nature of consumption itself has evolved quite considerably to include a wide range of behaviours beyond simple marketplace exchanges and transactional shopping-related behaviours to include alternatives such as sharing and collective consumption.

Mainstream marketing has been slow to embrace these within literature with rare exceptions (Argo 2014, Bardhi and Eckhardt 2012, Belk 2007, 2008, 2010,

2013, Epp and Price 2008, Ozanne and Ozanne 2008, Scaraboto 2015).

Despite a few calls for broadening the remit of the nature of the marketplace and consumption behaviour under study within marketing (Sherry 1990, 2000) interest in other types of supra-economic behaviours remain unexplored (Sargesan 2002). In the context of place there is much scope to examine its axiological value, the overlaps between private and public domains as subjected to marketing and the logic of market capitalism and situating its study within the broader context of consumption literature.

Consequently there is grounding for expanding the examination of place as a unit of observation, analysis, and analytical force and situating it within the broader consumption scholarship through a more phenomenological, embodied, and emplaced contemplation, drawing inspiration from broader disciplinary scholarship and bridging gaps between them and mainstream marketing managerial science.

II. PLACE BEYOND MARKETING

Place, Space, and Social

Some of the gaps in understanding place as a concept and construct in mainstream marketing literature can be contextualised against place treatments across broader social sciences in order to identify bridging locations. The preoccupation in marketing literature with treating place as a site and synonymising it with servicescapes or settings for social and marketplace exchanges is derivative of similar epistemic treatments of sites and spaces in social sciences. Genetic influences of such thinking have been historically evident in disciplinary understandings of spaces as sites and settings for social interaction and exchange (Simmel 1903 cited in Levine 1971).

Much like understanding servicescape as a site for situating marketplace exchanges and consumer-place interactions, space in social sciences has been situated as the locus for micro-sociological encounters and studied for interpersonal interactions with the environment. As an object of study, space has been coloured by social characteristics of race and class, and the nature of the setting itself as urban (Wirth 1938) or rural (Redfield 1947) and therefore has been viewed as a microcosmic human ecological system (Park, Burgess, and MacKenzie 1925) formed through social interactions shaped by social characteristics and the nature of the environment. Site or space simply becomes an epistemic tool or explanatory mechanism for the social organisation and structures within. As scholarly focus on social exchanges and

interactions increases, space disappears gradually as an object of inquiry in itself within disciplinary understandings.

Early epistemic approaches to space in social sciences have also adopted a relatively unproblematic view of space as a fixed and stable entity much like marketing scholarship treats site as a setting and object. Historically space as a scholarly construct has reflected a spatial view of a world of discontinuity and disjuncture, a world organised as abstract, neutral, grids along distinct territorial structures and boundaries, each grid constitutive of societies with individual personalities, cultures, and national characteristics with little or no connection to landscape or anything beyond (Bell and Newby 1976).

Such a thinking has made assumptions about fairly stable associations and linkages between geography, territory, and culture, (Appadurai 2001), territory being contingent upon spatial particularities and culture in turn being territorially determined (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). In this coherent, isomorphic world of spatialised cultures, a nuanced, multi-cultural world with polythetic sensibilities and subcultural distinctions are often missing. By adopting this view to the service of packaging and marketing places as brands, place marketing also makes assumptions about readily identifiable and ascribable signifiers to territorial grids such as cities, regions, and nations, enabling their easy commodification, packaging, and branding without acknowledging the inherent inconsistencies and challenges of such an endeavour. Just as marketing literature treats place as a static locale that exists to serve the dominant logic of market capitalism by reflecting a corporate view of the world, space in social

sciences has also been considered inert and homogenised under the hegemonic forces of capitalism (Gramsci 1971).

This preoccupation with epistemic treatments of space and site means that its ontological development has remained historically weak across social sciences, attracting criticism for its lack of theorisation (Arnold 1978, Castells 1977, 1978, Urry 1994). The underlying weaknesses in scholarly assumptions about space have been further exacerbated by disruptions in global socio-economic structures and macro-level political changes brought about by the forces of globalisation (Massey 1984) which have called into question, the underlying assumptions about site, society, territory, and culture. A newly globalising world and the attendant dramatic changes in global spatial architecture has weakened the notion of space as a fundamental organisation of society, in turn aligned as a notion with territory. Globalisation has weakened state borders, created new forms of territories, nations, cross-border entities, supranational brands, and aspatial entities like trade blocs. New forms of nationalism re-territorialises society (Sassen 2001), causing space to collapse as a disciplinary unit of measurement and analysis for explaining societal organisations.

The emergence of new post-national geographies, mobile citizenships, and fluid forms of cultural identity (Appadurai 1986, 1990) also questions the assumption that society is synchronous with territory and culture. Ideas, ideologies, people, goods, images, messages, cultures, technologies, and capital are now in constant motion, their fluidity undermining and challenging conventional constructs of space, locale, and anthropological territory while dissipating the alignment of space with ideas of culture or ethnicity. Nationalism, national

culture, and ideologies are questioned and revisited (Anderson 1991, Gellner 1983), the idea of the nation-state becomes abstracted, territory disappears and becomes re-inscribed, and the global becomes a disorder in the making (Sassen 2002).

Alongside space, globalisation also collapses the notion of time as a co-construct. As society and culture become increasingly disembedded from conventional anchors and rearranged according to new time spans, and as technology and scientific innovations rupture, disrupt, and elide spatial-temporal distances (Harvey 1989, Massey 1984) the concept of society as a stable and coherent spatio-temporal construct is undermined. Society moves away from stability, fixity, and discretion towards a more fluid, progressive state (Appadurai 2000, 2001). Such a society is no longer coeval, isomorphic, or spatially consistent, and causes difficulties in theorising its underlying spatio-temporal dimensions and understanding, as well as consolidating epistemic understandings of space as a site of social relations and interactions.

In parallel to epistemic treatments of space as sites of social relations, perspectives of power and ideology have added to epistemic understandings but weakened theorisation. Space and time have been conceived of as instruments pressed into service of political ideology and power. Space is constituted as a centre of production, under dominant ideological forces (Marx 1973, Marx and Engels 1964, 1976, Weber 1958), while the co-construct of time is a commodity to be exploited through measurement and monetisation of productivity. Coloured by the language of power dynamics, space is not an epistemic tool for studying social relations but for examination as a product or

outcome of power struggles. Social relations are considered ephemeral, lacking in existence beyond the spatial, and created out of the outcome of power struggles (Lefebvre 1991).

Space is only relevant inasmuch as it is a manifestation of power dynamics, a discursively constructed object whose narrative is influenced by hegemonic forces who dictate legitimacy for a few select, relegating others to heterotopic spaces (Foucault 1980, 1984). Social behaviours enacted are innately spatial, the social and spatial indistinguishable from one another and imbued with each other's presence (Cresswell 1996a, 1996b). They are ideologically articulated, resistant, transgressive, mediated by a doxa of what Cresswell terms being in-place or out-of-place (*ibid*). Space is less a cartographic entity, neither passive, inert geometry, nor an *apriori* construct, nor a container of things and cultures but produced and re-produced through constant power struggles. It is an outcome of ideology, whether under market-dominant capitalism or centrally planned communism, and is rendered inert, homogenous, bland, characterless, and a utopian space of ideological perfection (Lefebvre 1991, Moreiras 2010). These epistemic parallels underline the aphorism of the 1970s of space being socially constructed and that of the 1980s of the social being spatially constructed (Massey 1984).

Whether understanding space as a site for social relations or power struggles, their approaches are similar in examining space as an entity and outcome. Space is supposed as a goal-oriented process, an end result that needs to be attained without sufficiently addressing, the human element of what makes it happen or the processual nature of how it is attained. By idealising space as an

objective, the spatial co-construct of time is also overlooked and by default, the attribute of human agency is also neglected since human agency can only be examined in the context of societies (Sororkin and Merton 1937, Mead 1959). If societies are considered as cartographic structural equivalents then the process of shaping them is only possible through human agency, and a closer inspection of the processes by which these societal-spatial structures are shaped.

The inclusion of agency in the understanding of space only derives from Lefebvre's views on practice, on space being lived and practiced, a material product from which *it cannot separate itself because it is a product of them* (1991:66). According to Lefebvre, this space is not an assembly of *facta brutata*, but an element, continually produced through human action and undertaking. Under Lefebvre's practice-oriented thinking, space is conceptualised as a triadic dimension of perceived (*le perçu*), conceived (*le conçu*), and lived (*le vécu*), a dialectical relationship negotiated through physical and material flows of spatial practice produced and reproduced through specific representations (1974).

Through this trialectics of space and spatial triad, Lefebvre treats space as a neutral raw material that is moulded and shaped by powers in planned, pre-determined ways. A neutral space that is objectified and conceived of by planners is balanced against a representative, mental, almost utopian space which is supposedly moulded into idealistic attainable one. The lived space in between, the space of representation, arises from a combination of how it was intended and conceived, and how it emerges, and reflects practices and agency. Human agency is apparent in small demonstrations of power, in

practices of appropriation through which people exercise their ownership over the use of space and produce it thus.

By conceptualising a trialectic dimension of perceived, conceived, and lived spaces, Lefebvre introduces not only the element of agency and practice into static considerations of space but also succeeds in pulling away from dyadic either-or conceptualisations in knowledge which are typically Western, and draws from a more rounded idea of space. In this conceptualisation, space is inclusive of an 'Other', an imaginary or alternative dimension between present and absent, a third dimension that is not separate, that does not stand alone, yet does not take precedence on its own. This triplecity also feeds into Edward Soja's conceptualisation of third space (1989, 1996) indicating an otherness that is shaped by practice. This third dimension is not always stable. It is sometimes unruly, often chaotic and disorderly, is unfixed, evolving, but is never presentable in permanent constructions, mirroring the nature of human agency and practice itself.

On a global scale however human agency is subsumed within and constrained by the forces of globalisation which, by its simultaneous geographic concentration and dispersal of space, exacerbates inequality on a global scale, benefiting some while trapping and oppressing many others (Massey 1984, 1985, 1991, Sassen 2001). The forces of globalisation weaken epistemic treatments of space as organising mechanisms for societal structures, territories, social relations, and cultural containers and as ideologically planned products. With the collapse of global manufacturing and increased mobility of capital and talent, space is now reconstituted from site of production to site of

consumption. Society as a world of flows in a constant state of flux disrupts both constructs of space and time. Space is reimagined beyond *apriori* constructs of social relations, cultures, and interactions. In a new world of uncertainty and disorder, all existing notions of how people relate to territory, culture, community, identity, locality are questioned and disrupted.

Place itself is no longer boundaried, enveloped by space and time; it is porous, penetrable, linked through multiple layers to the local and outside world, riven by internal conflicts and contestations. It is no longer be viewed through internalised histories but rather as intersections of multiple constellations of social relations that meet and weave together at a particular locus, continually reproduced through dynamic sets of processes (Massey 1984, 1994, Appadurai 1986, 1990, 2001, Marcus 1986). With space-time compression and the increasing porosity of boundaries between local and global, places become more characterised by relationships with the outside world (Massey 1991), place is no longer rooted in territoriality, thus making holding on to a notion of identity more challenging.

The postmodern condition impacts upon the understanding of space, time, and place in a manner that directly affects its conceptualisation and treatment in marketing literature. As space becomes reconstituted as a centre of consumption, it promotes a dominant visual and aesthetic culture in keeping with the postmodern ethos of disorientation and fragmentation (Best and Kellner 1991, Jameson 1991). Urban spaces replete with dreamscapes and experiential citadels become powerful, showcasing landscapes of power and spectacle, merging space, aesthetics, and experience (Zukin 1992).

A growing consumerist economy is underpinned by this visual landscape as spaces are pressed into the service of the consumer economy manifesting through grand servicescapes and sites of experiences, commodified and projected through spectacles and simulacrum (Baudrillard 1988, 1994, Debord 1967, 1977). Service centres that produce and sustain the consumer service economy are constituted around decisions based on suitability of locales that can maximize profits and utility (Dempsey 1960a, Dempsey and Thünen 1960b, Weber 1909, 1929). As consumption spaces move from the periphery to the centre and become the new role model for production (Styhre and Engberg 2003), third spaces as sites of transcendent liminality (Soja 1989, 1996) become important in bridging the gap between real and imagined across a range of spaces from coffee shops, gyms, bookshops, to public spaces.

Further as conventional assumptions about space and time are disrupted and dismantled, the notion of 'place' grows into a defensive reactionary move, as a demonstration of a longing for coherence in the face of relentless fragmentation, disorientation, and temporal disruption. In a world characterised by flows and flux, a paradoxical need is created for new identities that reflect different forms of nationalism, exemplify loci of romanticised escapism, reconstructed history, and reinvented heritage (Massey 1991). However they need to be identified and signified, commodified as packaged objects and positioned for advantage because the *less important the spatial barriers, the greater the sensitivity of capital to the variations of place within space, and the greater the incentive for places to be differentiated in ways attractive to capital* (Harvey 1989:295-296),

thus branded and marketed through stereotypical tropes (Kearns and Philo 1993).

Across these epistemic treatments, it may be worthwhile to note that the observed object or unit of inquiry, space is still broadly deterministic and structural. It is perceived as site, setting, locale, or commodity. Epistemic treatments only serve to illustrate what is produced or how it is produced as an output through practices or practical interactions with the environment whose practices are specifically represented and orchestrated through myths and images (Shields 1991, 1992). Human agency is still embedded within structural forces of the environment although interest in practice serves to unpack and extend understanding of agency.

Lefebvre's work decentres human subject from space and examines the processes of how it is produced and appropriated through practice. It goes some way towards including human agency and intent in the way space is practiced and focuses attention on what results from such agency but also succeeds in extending the dyadic of space into trialectics by the inclusion of the Other, which in turn finds parallels in Soja's (1989, 1996) third space and performance of liminality. Soja's work helps reflect on how human agency and practical methodologies help reimagine neutral spaces into one's own through everyday actions.

These works are of interest in understanding consumers and are reflected in how marketing addresses elements of consumer behaviour as they exercise agency in appropriate spaces in servicescapes and participate in co-production

of the space (Aubert-Gamet and Cova 1997). What marketing scholarship does not do adequately though is focus on everyday practices and actions of everyday people in managing space, inspiration for which can be found in DeCerteau's work who extends this further by examining everyday practices, not just those of marketplace actors, in how people make sense of space. DeCerteau's work addresses individualised idiosyncratic experiences of everyday practices, termed 'speech acts' (1984) in how people deploy makeshift techniques and routines – categorised as the present, discrete, and phatic – to make sense of space. It adds an embodied, emplaced view of spatialisation of the individual in place, and complements understandings of structure and agency in unpacking and deconstructing agency through the lens of practice.

The outcome of these epistemic treatments is still resident within the idea of space as a universal abstract construct, co-related with time, and place as a derivative of space. While marketing and consumption literatures still use space and place interchangeably without sufficient attention to their respective positions as objects of study, social sciences privilege space over place, treating the former as primary and the latter as derivative, thus pre-determining its ontological position and hierarchy.

Revisiting Space-Place Hierarchy

The ontological understanding of space as synonymous with territory and as a primary, ascendant, universal given, is perceived as an ideological legacy of Western philosophical doctrines. This cartographic view of space and its

ontological relationship with place is addressed extensively by philosopher Edward Casey in his works *Getting Back into Place* and *Fate of Place* (1993, 1996). Drawing from mythical, religious, and philosophical narratives from the pre-modern across modern and to the post-modernist eras, Casey traces the ontological and epistemological trajectories of space and place constructs in social sciences in order to unpack and deconstruct their hierarchical positioning. He argues that space as an ontological concept was accorded pre-eminence across much of social sciences owing to the legacy of centuries of modern Western philosophical thought, itself influenced by the Enlightenment movement, mainstream scientific principles of rationalism, and an overall fixation with linearity, metrics, and measurements.

Under this Cartesian model, space and its measurable co-construct of time, is seen to have been gradually rendered from natural to absolute to abstract, defined as geometric, isotropic, and cartographic, and understood as homogenous empty grids populated by objects and human beings. This, Casey argues, has resulted in place being virtually erased from mainstream discourse and philosophical thought and being subordinated to space. The modernist predilection for rendering space and place incompatible and forcibly separated, results in an ontological dissolution of place within space, conceptual reduction to positionality and a subdivision of coordinates, and an epistemological reduction to locale as subordinate to space.

Casey dismisses this as 'contrived genealogy', an attempt to separate history from geography. He argues that the modernist ontological privileging of space over place, and its reconfiguration as a universal abstract is reflective of the

philosophical ascendance of the universe over cosmos, of transcendent geography over particularity, which frames a conflict between mathematical understandings of space and its phenomenological experience 'lived' by individuals.

In contrast, Casey argues that ancient philosophical thought considered cosmogenesis to be inextricably linked with topogenesis and place was considered divine and co-terminous with God. Casey attempts to revisit and rethink the ontology of place and its position vis-à-vis space by transcending Western modernism and drawing from pre-modern, ancient philosophies which managed to reconcile the absolute and relative within a framework. Since habitues are both placial and temporal instead of spatial, he holds for both space and time to be contained within place, and calls *to rethink space as place* (1996: 287, 209), for place to be considered the absolute, universal and be restored to its rightful ontological position and supremacy over space (2001).

Having argued a case for regarding place as universal, superior ontology over space, Casey proceeds to move away from place staticity by describing its nature and character as processual and eventful. Places are not inert geographical loci. They are subject to change. They take place, occur as events or enactments; *places not only are; they happen* (1996:26). Place is an event; it relates to that which it eventuates; place takes place. Further, place does not situate; it possesses unsited virtues, *special non-geometric properties* (201). It becomes spatio-temporalised, expressed as an experienced in place by the event of place (1997:340). Place thus brings together space and time. It is

idiolocal, compenetrative, and deconstructive of the opposition it brings together and holds within its own ambience (Wynn 2007).

Place is a non-fixed, non-sited process and event but not so elusive that it cannot be comprehended. Its processual nature means that it possesses sufficient gathering powers to accumulate things, events, animate and inanimate experiences, histories, languages, and thoughts in order to be perceived as heterogenous, polyvalent, rhizomatic, omnilocal, and multirooted. Culture occurs and is created in place (33). Place is elastic, flexible, porous, and sufficiently coherent that it can be remembered and experienced, but also lent to typologies (1996:44). It personifies, embodies, predicates, and shapes human experiences (Pink 2008, Sack 1997) and therefore needs to be understood beyond formal structures or cartography.

Having revisited and reconceptualised the ontology of place and its processual, eventful nature through his philosophical works, Edward Casey outlines how place discourses can be revalorised, by inviting phenomenological attention to implacement and emphasis on subjective lived experiences. Inspired by and drawing from Merleau-Ponty, Husserl, and the central ontological question of Being underpinned by Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* (1962), Casey restores a phenomenological sensitivity to the contemplation of place in defocalising the prioritisation of knowledge over practice.

The contemplation of place now moves away from the Western preoccupation with epistemology of space and veers towards human agency and the temporal quality of human beings, the stance of an interested human being situated in a

particular place at a particular time in understanding place in relation to the situated human subject. The ontology of place is conceived through the inhabiting practice of the subject emplaced within a particular spatial-temporal paradigm, who connects to the world through their own history, thus determining its *genius loci*.

Casey discusses emplacement as a cultural process, as a way of transcending coordinates on a map and becoming intimately associated with life's events and experiences (Sack 1997), enabling intimate connections that come to represent a person through their past, part of themselves. His work reflects ideas of cultural geography, *genius loci*, and topophilia (Adams, Hoeschler, and Till 2001, McDowell 1997, Relph 1976, Tuan 1974). Moreover in considering the directionality and orientation of place as enacted bodily through human experiences, it also calls to mind corporeal perspectives, topoanalysis or the psychological study of sites of lives (Bachelard 1958, 1964) in viewing the body as the perceiving subject of place through lived experience. Further in returning the human subject to the centre of place in accessing the lived world and the mutual interdependence of place and body, it also centralises phenomenological experiences drawing from Heidegger's notion of '*concernful absorption*' (1962:101).

Casey develops the corporeal and phenomenological lines of argument further by emphasising the mutual connection between body and landscape, place and self as *coeval epicentres* (1993:29). He suggests that places and beings modify one another as 'constitutive co-ingredients'. Beings and human agency require places to be the selves they are in the process of becoming, framing a human

presence in place, and place as an interior, internal presence, a kind of spatial framework. Place and self are mutually imbricated, *no place without self and no self without place* (2001:684).

This argument frames the concept of a 'geographicalself', the bodily basis of the human subject and the human self's orientation and situation in place.

Landscape and body are the epicentres of the geographical self; self, body, and landscape address the different dimensions of place, the inhabitation of place in a circumambient landscape. As the self concerns itself with agency and identity of the geographical subject, the body links self to lived place, and the landscape is a presented layout of a set of places. In offering a convincing critique of static Cartesian notions of space, Casey thus melds geography and philosophy towards a renewed phenomenological contemplation of place.

Contemplating Place

The idea of place, self, implacement, and the geographical self is expanded upon by linking it to the idea of affect in understanding how modes of experiencing place can be channelled. Place affect is conjured up of responses to it (Casey 1993), theorised as emotional resonance (Laurence and Philo 2006, Thrift 2004), indicative of subjective moods of place (Anderson 2009). Affect is an array of feeling-states that characterise everyday life, capturing the emotional palette of lived experiences. Beyond simple concatenation of feeling, affect also captures the corporeal as it constitutes the body's power of affections, its capacity to affect and in turn be affected by the world of bodies, objects, and things encountered, the *potentia agendi* (Spinoza 1989) or a potential action-state constitutive of action-potential or an individual's

dispositional orientation to the world. Affect is experienced as an emotional state AND a variation in one's willingness and capacity to respond to that state (Hardt 2007) but it transcends feelings, emotions, and analysis of emotional expressions (Massumi 2002) to express itself as a *specific manifestation of the body's power of acting, its lived force or action-potential* (Deleuze 1988:50).

Affect provides a means of contemplating place and linking it to self. It draws from emotional geography in building and experiencing a series of linkages or symbiosis between place and self, mutually imbricated in and shaping one another (Casey 2001, Clough and Halley 2007, Conradson 2005, Soja 1989, 1996, Thrift 2004, 2007), understood as affective engagement. Affective engagement is more than just mere fleeting evanescence or exchange of essences between place and body. It is an emergent, intense, and autonomous force, an assemblage of human and non-human bodies, actors, subjects, objects, processes, and interactions without being reducible or resident in these bodies (Anderson, Keanes, McFarlane, and Swanton 2012, Anderson and McFarlane 2011, Deleuze and Guattari 1987, Duff 2010, Massumi 2002, Thrift 2004).

Affective engagement encompasses a series of activities and practices potentially enactable in place (Duff 2010:881-882) including the durable social and material elements of place production (Anderson 2009). Its range, richness, and complexity make affective engagement difficult to be reified under categories or typologies of emotions or analytics. It fits neither as an objective impersonal analysis or subjective personal emotions. It is a mix of narrative and

non-narrative, semiotic and asignifier, but manages to capture and encapsulate the mutual imbrications of place and affect in producing one another, adding a rich, affective dimension to De Certeau's narratives of place analysis (1984) and the production and reproduction of space (Lefebvre 1991).

Place being eventful and dynamic, and the self and its capacity for feeling and perception also being in constant change, the nature and intensity of affect and affective engagement that provides a means of contemplating place and self also mutates perpetually. The interplay of these elements is conceptualised as an affective atmosphere (Anderson 2006, 2009), which emerges out of a synecdochic, concernful absorption, a convergence of myriad material, spatial, relational, and discursive elements captured through their affective interactions.

The affective atmosphere is a complicated of socio-material and affective components linked together, resident in the co-presence of body, place, and self (Anderson 2009). Its emergent properties are unique to each occasioning of place, its expression, articulation of specific feeling states produced in and of affect through the body's dispositional orientation and modifications. It evolves and mutates in response to the nature and intensity of affective engagement, the resonance of action-potential, the pitch and echo of multiple practices and encounters experienced within place (Thrift 2004). The resultant outcome is a *thick* or *thin* place (Casey 2001) similar to an anthropological place (Augé 1995) filled with movements, actions, discourses, emotions, and memories. It is an outcome of dynamic and eventful processes and affective engagement characterised by an appropriate affective atmosphere.

A thick or thin place is both social and spatial, concretised through time, formed and understood through local codes and references. It invites phenomenological sensitisation and an individual's '*concernful absorption*', the intensity of which and the underlying self, shapes the texture of place and imbricates it with affect. A thick place is one that presents and supports opportunities for personal enrichment, deepens affect, broadens an individual's lived experience of place, enhances one's sense of belonging and meaning, and forges experiential connections (Casey 2001:684). It restores affective fecundity of place (Duff 2010). A thin place in contrast lacks the rigour and substance of a thick place as it does not engage the same concernful absorption, nor does it offer the requisite resonance to bond the self in place.

The intensity of absorption waxes and wanes with the intensity of outgoing and incoming processes related to self and place. Outgoing processes require active engagement with lived body encounters and experiences with places and resonances – a '*forever going out to meet the place-world*' in contrast to which incoming processes require an '*ingression of the place-world*' – a coming into self where each body bears traces of the places it has known.

These constant, perpetual incoming and outgoing processes that shape how the self meets and confronts the place-world, affecting and in turn being affected by each other, etch a somatography or inscription of place in the body. They reconcile the perpetual dialectic of centripetal / hestial and centrifugal / hermetic modes of *being in place*, to intensify and shape affect and resonance, to texture a thick place with affect, intensify self, absorption, and engagement. A thin or non-robust place however does not enfeeble one's self; the latter simply makes a virtue of circumstance by becoming more responsive to

differences between places. A self that can intensely engage and connect with a thick place can also flourish in disembodied, virtual, and thin places through an appropriate shaping of responses, the '*compensatory logic of loss*' (Casey 2001:685). Both thick and thin places have divergent ontologies but they are illustrative products of affective resonances, one produced by emphasis and the other by banalisation.

Casey's work succeeds in a radical revalorisation of the conversation around space and place. His analysis and arguments bring in ideas of space, territory, locale, cartography, structures, and site but also includes elements of human agency and practice. His analysis is sufficiently cognisant of the intricate interplay between numerous elements in constituting space and by giving nod to the elements of practice and agency, he paves the way for a more personal, human contemplation of territory. However the starkest rethink around the idea of territory is Casey's positioning of the ontological debate around space and place. By decoupling and deconstructing the relationship between the two and repositioning their respective positions in the ontological hierarchy, he forces the reader audience to question the unquestioning given of space in normal discourse, to examine the genesis of space as an original construct in understanding *genius loci*, and to valorise the more cosmological idea of place as the original source material.

By supporting his argument with philosophical, phenomenological discourses that prop up the idea of place as a primary construct over space, he also paves way for the audience and researchers to seek, to question, to verbalise the

nuanced, almost inarticulate bond between place and self, to reach within and look at how places imbricate and leave traces within self and how people leave traces of their selves behind in places they inhabit within body and mind. His work builds on and supports the inclusion of elements of affect and affective engagement in the contemplation of place and also enables place to be comprehended as a dynamic process in itself and not a static end-goal. This opens up opportunities to apprehend place, its ontological position, and epistemological contemplation anew.

Habitus and Practices

From clarifying the ontological position of place, their processual, eventful nature, their crystallisation in the geographical self, and their contemplation through affect and affective engagement, shaping affective atmospheres in the outcome of thick and thin places, we are now confronted with the question of how such a place can be identified, accessed, and consumed. What makes a place thick or thin? How does it emerge? What are its dimensions and contours? How does it transition? What processes does it undergo? What animates that process? How do they happen into one another? What kind of affective engagements transform one into another, enrich or dissipate? What makes them?

Some explanations can be garnered from the lens of *habitus* and practice (Bourdieu 1977, 1979, 1984). Habitus is often understood and theorised as a sociological force field, a composite of elements such as lifestyles, beliefs, values, inherent within social and institutional contexts that play out as a

network, structure, or sets of relationships (Navarro 2006). Within these contexts, people express and reproduce their particular dispositions in accordance with the affect and influence of the broader environment on the force field. Therefore habitus is characterised by a set of acquired schemata, sensibilities and dispositions (Scott and Marshall 2005, Wacquant 2004), understood often as 'taste'. Habitus is used in sociological commentary to explain how social structures are embodied, legitimised, and reproduced through the interplay between agency and structure, through the expression of sociological markers such as gender, race, or class. In sociological expressions, norms and tendencies that guide behaviour and thinking are resultant from structured propensities that are contextualised and play out as patterns, but this suggests that habitus is a social rather than an individual process (Wacquant 2005 cited in Navarro 2006).

In Casey's analysis however habitus becomes more personal, agentic, and performative in the understanding and enactment of place and its interrelationship with self. Habitus becomes the middle term between lived place and geographical self (Casey 2001). It comprises an array of practices or physiological and psychological habitudes enacted in a particular place that frame its affective dimensions.

Practices are enacted by humans as agentic subjects; since action is both lived and intentional, the value of habitus is resident within the actuality of its enactment. If the world is understood as a layout of places, then habitus expresses place-world commitment through performance and enactment, an embodiment of reaching out to place, the Being or Becoming in place (Casey

1987, 1993, 1997, 2001). Habitus links the subject and environment, geographical self and lived place; it embodies a practical understanding of Heidegger's *Dasein* through a combination of corporeal, sensory, kinaesthetic, and cognitive practices and memories and provides a framework to understand, perceive, identify, recognise, experience, and socio-historically and spatially construct place. The body's schemata, corporeal engagement, and spatio-temporal reality is framed by habitus; habitus shape the body as a spatial vehicle through which the lived space is mediated.

The nature, intensity, and richness of habitus and practices and its interaction with affect results in the production of a thick or thin place. A thick place is textured by affect and the thickness of habitus prevalent (Duff 2010). A thin place by contrast becomes attenuated through loss of habitual density, becoming desiccated and diminished when one set of habitus are replaced by another. The thickness or thinness of an affective atmosphere therefore is an energetic expression of the syndetic force of practice and affect in place. Affect enables one to realise the potential in place for its enactment through practice. Affect is the attractor, the catalyst, the navigation tool. Practice is the mechanism through which people realise habit, sensation, and affect (Anderson 2009, Massumi 2002). Through habit or practice, one's affective engagement with place is memorialised, embedding and emplacing oneself. This memorialisation transforms thin places into thick. Conversely when habits attenuate, practices erode, memory fades, subjective emplacement and feelings dissolve, thick places are dissipated and desiccated into thin.

Habitus and practice and their interpenetration with affect grounds attention on place as an object of contemplation and unit of observation. Through the lens of practice and the added dimension of affect, place is perceived as an affective atmosphere thickened or thinned by the collocation of practical resources, offering opportunities for emplacement and experiencing place (Duff 2010). Practice supplements DeCerteau's urban rhetoric of contrasting between an ideal, concept city, and one that is appropriated through inventive, diverse, subversive, and mobile speech acts that transform urban environments. Practice supports the accumulation of stories through *making do* (1984:29-42) and reinforces the idea of place as a gathering process.

Place becomes complex, fluid, eventful, fluctuating, and transitional through changing practices, the phenomenological equivalent of an anthropological place (Augé 1995). Its ontology is understood beyond cartographic coordinates, spatial boundaries, or artificial envelopes of static history and heritage representing symbolic authenticity. This is in contrast to space in marketing literature, epistemically understood as a 'non-place' (Augé 1995), a referentially insignificant, fungible, uniform site erased of specificity or uniqueness, sterile, devoid of emotion, memory, or implacment. Non-places symbolise the transition from modernity to post- and super-modernity in the form of supermarkets, airports, retail settings, and terminals, transient, ephemeral, fleeting sites of 'placelessness' (Relph 1976) lacking in *genius loci*. Marketing control erases the local and familiar, engineering a bland corporatized spectacle on sites, inventing synthetic histories and packaging identity and heritage snapshots for the market whether as retail settings or place-objects. Genuine memories are

depersonalised, rendering sites as 'sociospheres' (Albrow,1997) devoid of 'stuff' (Gieryn 2000) that enables individuals to engage with spaces.

Place replete with practices on the other hand can be perceived beyond containers or simple congeries of material objects, structured behaviours, and political technologies (Thrift 2004). It can be understood as an experiential gathering process, contemplated through self, affect, emplaced atmospheres, and evolving events, made and unmade in and through the contours of the built environment and chronological changes, perceived through undulations and improvisations of practice (Duff 2010). Since place, self, processes, and habitudes and practices are all mutating and transformative, they are understood not just as a process of individual interdependencies but also of collective engagement that combine community, identity, belonging, and practices (Casey 1996).

Practices and Consumption

Practice and the lens of habitus enable a renewed focus on place and new ways of examining it from epistemological and ontological perspectives. As an object of study, place becomes more comprehensive viewed as an embodied nature of everyday life and practice, rather than a reductive site or setting of marketplace actions, enactments, value additions, co-optations, or co-productions of marketplace logic.

As a unit of observation, place is examined for how it is made and unmade through everyday life practices embodied through affect, its changing

intensities, action, and action-potential expressed through human agency, materialities, processes, and social interactions. It is studied as an object internalised through affect and externalised through action-potential, embedded within concurrent and simultaneous incoming and outgoing processes and multiple practices. By extension it enables a renewed examination and revisiting of place ontology and its nature as distinct from space, and its position as a cosmic, universal concept that subsumes space and time as changing, mutating, evolving, co-constitutive elements conscripted within.

Place also offers enhanced potential to be studied anew as a concept in marketing-managerial science situated within the broader phenomenon of consumption instead of as a self-contained construct that needs to be controlled, manipulated, and used as a marketing resource. By situating it within the wider remit of consumption that is more cognisant of public-private, societal-economic interactions, the axiological potential of place can be further investigated as a collective resource that is shaped, contested, produced, and consumed by everyday living and not just through marketplace practices and enactments.

Broadening the framework within which place can be situated within consumption also invites attention to the nature and role of consumption in managerial and social sciences in order to examine at close range its potential for contextualising place as a unit of observation and analysis. Historically consumption and its sites and spaces have been situated and subsumed under domains of production (Marx and Engels 1970). Consumption has been perceived as a social indicator and barometer of distribution of economic

resources (Bourdieu 1984), the materialisation of power relationships within social contexts (Veblen 1994) and an exercise in socio-economic organisation involving arrangements of socio-spatial consumer categories (Bergson 1998). Alongside, consumption spaces sit firmly within the domain of production, serving and facilitating the latter's needs. They are relevant only inasmuch as they express the tangible outcomes of production.

The emergence of postmodernism, and the decline of mass industrialisation in the West has seen the collapse of this dichotomous relationship between production and consumption, the latter moving from margin to periphery to centre, away from production to becoming its role model (Styhre and Engberg 2003). Consumption becomes a systemic concept (Douglas and Isherwood 1979), central to society, a triumphant statement of the most expressive form of capitalism. It is played out within the marketplace domain with the consumer at its heart, fulfilling their agentic roles through shopping related activities.

Consumption grounds society and offers certainty, stability, and reassurance in a disorienting, fragmented, postmodern world, fosters liberation, desire, and enchantment, while providing a machinery on which social reproduction is played out (Debord 1977, 1981).

As consumption becomes central to society, the spaces of production are now reconstituted as spaces of consumption, merging space, aesthetics and experience as spatial practice and a colonising space (Benjamin 1999). They become social and cultural spaces as much as socio-cultural spaces become spaces of consumption but still firmly situated within the domain, structures, and mechanisms of the marketplace. However the dominance of symbolic qualities

in epistemic treatments of spaces results in a loss of facticity, making their ontological status uncertain. The greater the symbolic intensity the more nebulous their ontological status and this is only intensified as they become increasingly commodified, fetishized as bounded objects, produced and packaged, thus reinforcing the dualist notion of production and consumption.

The dominance of symbolism and the privileging of identity formation and representation through consumption and marketplace activities constrains its theoretical consolidation with extant studies heavily skewed towards speculative theories (Warde 2005). The consumer-actor is a human agent relevant only for the symbolic adequacy of the consumption activity they participate in (Bauman 1988, Giddens 1991) and consumption is simply viewed as an enactment of performance, whose goal it is to orchestrate and achieve an articulated identity. It is mostly understood through shopping-related behaviours and practices that are contained within the knowledge, understanding, and other teleo-affective structures of the marketplace. The space or site of consumption is simply an added aesthetic resource that aids and mediates this marketplace performance. The constraints of the marketplace either through domain-structures or through agency-actors, restricts theoretical development of consumption further.

A more syncretic concept of consumption emerges only when viewed away from the dominant logic of the marketplace. It is a broad, rich, all-encompassing phenomenon that *'cannot be restricted to, nor defined by market exchange'* alone or reduced to demand (Warde 2005:137). Consumption is neither isolated nor separated from production; it becomes a type of production in itself, characterised by its ruses, fragmentation, and its clandestine nature, visible and

constitutive through not only through materialities but also a range of processes and practices (Barthes 1983, Baudrillard 1993, 1998, DeCerteau 1984). As such practice becomes central to understanding consumption and provides an empirical basis of examining consumption itself rather than simply as an epistemological tool to examining what consumers do (Reckwitz 2002, Schatzki 1996, Warde 2005).

Consumption needs to be understood through the social processes involved in the creation and reproduction of practice rather than simply through materialities or objects of possession (Brownlie and Hewer 2011, Echeverri and Skålen 2011, Murphy and Patterson, 2011, Shove and Pantzar 2005, Watson and Shove 2008). It rarely occurs purely for its own sake; instead consumption holds several component moments which generate practices as both the conduit and the reason, the *raison d'être*, for gratifications and rewards. Consequently consumption itself calls to be viewed not as a practice in itself but as '*a moment in almost every practice* (Warde 2005:137), as a phenomenon or object of contemplation that exists as it is made through practice. While practice itself is comprehended through non-instrumentalist notions of conduct, it emphasises both observations of routine and embodiment of emotion, desire, and affect and remains an integral part of most spheres of life (Harvey et al 2001). Thus consumption is not always coherent or unified but occurs and is perceived as a culturally dispersed practice that happens in and across different sites and settings.

While consumption is understood through moments in practice, the settings within and through which it is enacted are understood as polysemic and

heteroglotic, organised yet fluid, socio-cultural and economic spaces constituted in and of practices (DeCerteau, Girard, and Mayol 1988). Such a space is neither static nor a bounded site (Clifford 1997) but more of an itinerary comprising of a series of encounters. This element of fluidity and dynamism problematizes the materiality of conventional social sciences thinking in understanding place as a concept and methods of approaching it (Law and Urry 2004, Thrift 2006).

At the same time, it provides and strengthens the argument for a philosophical, phenomenological, and ontological underpinning for the contested materiality of the real world, and its articulations in consumption and spaces of consumption. With the re-situating of space ontology vis-à-vis place and its role as a constitutive co-ingredient alongside time within place, it is now understood as a product and process of the place-world viewed through consumption.

Inviting philosophical contemplation of consumption further strengthens arguments for theoretical, conceptual, and praxeological explorations of not only place as a renewed ontology but also consumption as a phenomenon within and through which it is situated, perceived, and understood. As space is revisited and resituated as place, the latter is examined as an unsited, fluid, dynamic ontology comprising of both space and time, conceptualised and captured through practice and affect. Affect clarifies epistemic treatments and used as a tool of ontological construction while practice is understood as a mechanism that shapes affect and affective atmosphere and thus a heuristic lens with which to examine place.

By extension place can be contemplated beyond the limitations of spaces with referential coordinates as unboundaried landscape. It can be observed through practices of liminality, movement, homecoming, and re-inhabitation between and across sites (Casey 1996) and invite attention on how it is situated, constituted, and become through consumption and perceived through a dispersed set of practices. It can be examined through practices that embody knowledge, affect, action potential, emotional states, and everyday moments. It can be constructed and communicated through the vocabulary of the marketplace and everyday life and as an interpenetration of public and private spaces, as a '*set of entangled pathways*' (Ingold 2007:103) of imaginative practices (Pink 2008).

Non-Representational Practices

It is apparent that practice can be a heuristic tool with which to empirically examine place ontology as evidenced and captured through affect, the phenomenon of consumption as it happens in and through moments of practice, and the revisiting of place itself as an object of consumption constitutive in and of and through every day practices. In the spirit of fidelity to phenomenological explorations and freeing oneself from the dominance of symbolism, an expanded understanding of practices, their enactment, and performance is concretised through the body of work of non-representational theories (Thrift 1996, 1997, 2000a, 2000b).

This diverse body of work or rather plurality of theories (Lorimer 2005), draws from cultural geography and intellectual antecedents in phenomenological and

poststructuralist works of Foucault, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze, Guattari, Benjamin, DeCerteau, Latour, and Serres. It is interested in corporeal and performative ontologies and focuses on embodied, intangible aspects of everyday life, multiple intellectual currents and sensibilities that demonstrate heightened sensitivities to phenomenological registers (Anderson and Smith 2001, Anderson and Harrison 2010, Harrison 2000, Latham and Conradson 2003, Longhurst 1997, McCormack 2002, McDowell 1997, Rodaway 1994, Thrift and Dewsbury 2000, Valentine 1999).

Non-representational theories (NRT) intend moving beyond social and static outcomes or productions, focusing attention instead on processes, human, and non-human formations. They do not prioritise representations or symbolism as primary epistemological vehicles. Indeed they attempt to pull back from the dominance of symbolism in social sciences which privileges representation and meaning over and above the '*response and rhetorical*' (Thrift 2000a:223). Symbolism simply produces and represents '*the fixed and the dead*' (Harrison 2000:499) and fails to apprehend the lived present as a generative process by its '*embalming obsession*' with representation and meaning.

Non-representational theories instead valorise processes and draw attention to methods that co-produce the world (Dewsbury, Harrison, Rose, and Wylie 2002, Thrift 2000b, Whatmore 2002, 2006, Latham 2003). They are a style of thinking that value and focus on practices, '*mundane, everyday practices that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites*' (Thrift 1997:142) demonstrating an interest in '*the geography of what happens*' (Thrift 2007:2).

Non-representational theories have developed into a diverse body of work (Anderson 2006, 2009, Anderson and Harrison 2006, 2010, Dewsbury 2000, 2003, Dewsbury et al 2002, Harrison 2000, 2007, 2008, Laurier and Philo 2006, Lorimer 2005, McCormack 2002, 2003, 2005, Thrift 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2007, 2008, Wylie 2002, 2005, 2006) in alignment with the 'relational' turn in geography. Their interest in practice stems from their attention to understanding life and expression '*through shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions, and sensuous dispositions*' (Lorimer 2005:84).

NRT adopts a stance of witnessing and describing the vitality of the world as it unfolds (Dewsbury 2003) with a view to animate and inject life into dead geographies of representation. It advocates a democratic relationship between the conceptual and empirical and strives to understand the world through a range of mechanisms such as material bodies that have established corporeal routines and specialised devices in reproducing themselves, '*productive concatenations*' that are constructed in and out of a range of resources that help in unpacking the intelligibility of the world (Thrift 2007:8).

NRT tries to attend to the '*onflow*' of everyday life (Thrift 2007) through the '*processual register of experience*' (Dewsbury et al 2002). It is concerned with practices of subjectification which is comprised of multiple interrelations through multiple spaces through continual processes of encounters. It demonstrates the influence of Merleau-Ponty through its interest in the human body and its ability

to co-evolve with the world in parallel, both co-inscribing one another, the etched somatography that Casey alludes to earlier. NRT centralises affect by not treating body and world-things as separate; instead it attends to their material relatedness, their emergent capacities to act and interact.

The element of practice is concerned with the technologies of being – as an assemblage of knowledge, people, belief systems, spaces, buildings, heterogeneous networks, and connections (McFarlane 2011, Swanton 2011a, 2011b, 2011c) and orients attention towards the capacity of assembled orders as they change. It connects agency and matter, strongly influenced by Latour's (2005) actor-network theories but allows practice to connect with a range of phenomenological registers through affect and sensation (Thrift 2007).

The central role of affect frames practice in place (Anderson 2006, Anderson and Harrison 2006, Bissell 2008, Clough 2007, Dewsbury 2000, Gumbrecht 2004, Massumi 2002, McCormack 2003, Stewart 2007, Thrift 2004). NRT attempts to move away from representations and reading techniques of social sciences but is still concerned with them, apprehended as performative practices in themselves, as *doings* (Dewsbury et al 2002).

The attention to practices, phenomenological affect, sensation, and everyday life supports a performative, non-representational, affect based research approach to examining place ontology and consumption. Deep ethnographic work is a favoured approach as the most relevant means of getting at those practices although NRT is also supportive of innovative methodological hybrids (Dewsbury 2009, Doel and Clarke 2007, Latham 2003).

Ethnographic exposures enable researchers to focus on experience, storytelling, and immersion to frame empirical involvement, emplacement, embodiment, and engagement with practices. Ethnography itself is conceptualised as a placemaking practice (Pink 2008) constitutive of processual practices, a processual object both in being and becoming. It indicates a serious interrelationship between body, mind, and environment (Howes 2005).

Ethnographers are place practitioners emplaced in research contexts. They are situated neither as neutral observers nor as existing in intersubjective relationships with respondents and place. They constitute place through their own co-presence as much as subject, a mutual inscription of place as event to be simultaneously experienced and constituted (Pink 2008, 2010). They are equally enmeshed and emplaced as those of ethnographic participants co-producing and inscribing affective engagement with place. The researcher and subject are co-implicated in placemaking. A phenomenologically informed ethnography may provide an epistemically grounded way of understanding place and its constitution as an object of consumption through affect and practice.

Further, an innovatively augmented ethnographic empirical approach may highlight pathways in examining place as folding of body and landscape, a subject formation of placemaking and inhabiting through inhuman, nonhuman, and more than human forces, thus segueing gradually into a post-phenomenological contemplation which have helped reproblematised landscape (Ash and Simpson 2016, Lea 2009).

The post-phenomenological turn in way of thinking signposts some trajectories in contemplation of place, practice, and landscape, rethinking intentionality as more emergent, and recognising objects as having autonomous existence.

Combined the disciplinary context of practice, a critical re-reading of and engagement with phenomenological theories, and sensitisation of a 'more-than-human' approach may well extend the phenomenological focus into a post-phenomenological experiencing of subject in place.

Summary

The discussion above has sought to frame the intentions behind a renewed empirical examination of place as a concept, its role in and as object of consumption, by rationalising affect and practice as epistemic tools and heuristic lenses deployed for the purpose. It underpins the intentions behind adopting a phenomenological, immersive ethnography as a method of positioning and emplacing the researcher in the study context, to excavate the nature of affect and practice in understanding place and self, and to empirically critique and reflect on ethnography itself as a placemaking practice.

Moreover it seeks to understand the methods of undertaking and presenting the results of such an ethnography by privileging ordinary moments of everyday life practice rather than depending on overt symbolism and representation and demonstrating fidelity to the ideas of non-representational theories, in embracing flows and rhythms of everyday life and situating it within the context of the field site in which the ethnography is being undertaken.

It is hoped that such an endeavour will serve a new understanding of place away from the traditional ontological hierarchy of space-time, provide empirical support for restoring place to a superior ontological position, validate ethnography as a placemaking practice, and also demonstrate its epistemic and axiological value to the managerial practice of marketing and understanding consumption spaces.

III. CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach and design of the research study and addresses objective (b) to rationalise a phenomenologically sensitised street ethnography as placemaking practice and empirical method. The earlier literature review identified conceptual gaps that framed the study around theoretical examinations of place in consumption and the role of ethnography and practices in examining them. This chapter builds on that review by adapting and deploying a phenomenologically sensitised ethnographic approach, in itself constituting placemaking practice (Pink 2008). The approach is situated in the context of a complex relationship between phenomenology and sociology (Luckman 1973), the former historically understood as simply a matrix for research and not a subject of empirical investigation, against more modern thinking of perceptions and interpretations being inseparable, inter-existing (Maso 2001).

Against this background, this chapter discusses the ethnographic rationale and its relevance as placemaking empirical practice through the method of street ethnography. The chapter introduces historic street ethnography, an epistemic practice with genealogical antecedents in urban sociology, and outlines how it has been adapted, and repurposed as an innovative methodological tool to empirically examine place and practice in the context of marketing and consumption.

This is followed by an outline of the empirical data set, the rationale behind choice and context of field site, and an extended discussion on how the adapted street ethnography is positioned not only as a reinvigorated tool of epistemic practice in knowledge production but also as a critical reflexive approach in negotiating multiple positionalities of identity, subjectivity, perspective, voice, and representation. The critical reflexivity is embedded throughout the different stages of the ethnography as process and product, from data collection and inventory, to analysis, theming, narration, and framing units of observation and analysis, marking a transition to post-phenomenological ethnography.

This adapted street ethnography and its repositioning makes several distinct methodological and epistemological contributions to marketing research. The adaptation reinvigorates a near-moribund empirical method relegated within urban sociology and repositions it as a distinctly useful tool to study conceptual and contextual place in marketing and consumption.

Contextually, the street ethnography method opens up a range of spatial, territorial, and retail settings and sites as objects of place inquiry in consumption and marketing, thus expanding the boundaries of extant research. In addition the practices standpoint as lens of analysis develops the conceptualisation of place – as explained in the conclusions chapter – for a range of place interpretations from geographical and spatial to metaphorical and processual inclusive of complex phenomenological contemplations.

Research Approach

The research approach informing this study is an adapted form of conventional ethnography. It draws from and builds upon traditional ethnography used in

urban sociological and anthropological contexts, yet extends it through a phenomenologically sensitised study cognisant of practices. Conventional ethnographic approaches are rooted in historical anthropological understandings of a territorially contingent and spatially mapped world, with definitive presuppositions of culture, place, and field, purporting to study peoples and practices, and demonstrating fidelity to subjective realities and lived experiences. Ethnographic methods are underpinned by descriptive narration and interpretation of a socio-cultural group or system. The units of observation within such an examination includes patterns of behaviour, customs, or practices that are deemed observable and neutrally reportable (Creswell 1998). They study how people within specific settings interact with their environment in an attempt to discern pervasive patterns that can be explained by means of cultural themes or motifs.

The ethnography carried out becomes both a process and product; the ethnographic 'product' thus created generates descriptions about the group that is perceived to share a culture, thematises perspectives, analyses and interprets shared meanings, and generalises about the human social life of such anthropological inhabitants. Interpretations are supported by the collection of physical and material artefacts, stories, rituals, myths, and other forms of evidence around which themes can be developed and interpreted. Evidence gathering process is done through prolonged observations combined with interviews, as the ethnographer engages in extended immersion amongst the lives of the peoples they purport to study.

The ethnographic process on the other hand bridges the cognitive distance between an outsider's 'etic' perspective, standpoint about social order and the meaning of observable experiences on the one hand, with the insider's 'emic' perspective of learned feelings, realities, and experiences on the other. The ethnographer is required to reconcile the insider's perception of reality, its subjective consciousness or intent as a form of 'psychological re-enactment' (Schwandt in Denzin and Lincoln 2000), with their own conceptual and theoretical understanding of the research participant's social reality, thus playing both actor and subject (Stake 1974, 1978).

Critical developments in social sciences research have caused a reconfiguration of such ideas (Geertz 1983, Marcus and Fischer 1986, Tedlock 1991) in order to interrogate and reframe conventional notions of culture and place (Jacobs-Huey 2002) and to revisit existing assumptions about territorialised cultures and exotic locales that underpin traditional ethnography. This reflexive, deconstructive turn in thinking and the inherent problematisation of an ethnographer's supposedly neutral standpoint as objective observers (Clifford and Marcus 1986), highlights certain epistemic predicaments among traditional ethnography practitioners. It acknowledges the subjectivity of individuals and groups within the cultural contexts they are being studied in, while also admitting the lack of absolute authoritative knowledge held by the ethnographer.

Apart from the ideological dangers of assumed superiority of the neutral observer describing and reporting upon 'exotica', here also exists the risks of intellectual lethargy in inherent assumptions of culture as a generic and

generalised construct, and the ability of an ethnographic process to capture the complexity of such a construct within the constraints of a study. Critical, reflexive thinking instead calls for a more developmental, dialogical anthropology and narrative ethnography that accommodates greater collaboration between researcher and subject (Erickson and Murphy 2008, Lassiter 2001, 2005, Zenker and Kumoll 2010).

The ethnographic process needs grounding in a collaborative exploration and relationship between researcher, audience, and subject, and the ethnographic product that emerges from such an endeavour reflects an outcome that combines views of ethnographer and insider, extensive communication with the observed, and a continual dialogue with audience, subject, and oneself.

In recent turns in ethnographic practice it has become a central tenet that a more evolving, reflective, learning process is critical to robust ethnography that is respectful of both the ethnographer's craft and subjective experiences as well as standpoints of the observed subject. Such a process builds on ethnography's natural methods of observation and reportage, additional attention to occurrences and events, as useful heuristic tools, that generate research questions. It requires researchers to cultivate 'habits of observation' (McGuire 1997) that focus attention on conventional and unconventional, productive, unexpected, and non-obvious aspects of experiences.

It also forces researchers to reduce dependence on symbolism, imagery, and conventional tropes of cultural analytical themes and instead pay attention to methods of analysis and interpretation of non-representation methods,

interrogating one's own involvement, standpoint, bodily affect, behaviour, and responses to similar experiences.

Street Ethnography

In the context of studying place, ethnography in itself has been deemed a placemaking practice (Pink 2008) where the emplaced researcher interrogates their own geographical self in capturing place essence and interpreting it through non-representation. From this standpoint, an adaptive form of empiricism called **street ethnography** has been developed and deployed for purposes of examining place. Grounded in traditional ethnographic practice, cognisant of contextual understandings of sociology and anthropology, it is supportive of phenomenological, non-representational methods of analysis and interpretation without over-reliance on symbolism and imagery. In this study it has been used to examine an urban road as field site and can be framed as contextual innovation and contribution as such contexts are rarely interrogated in the field of marketing and consumption.

Historic Street Ethnography

Historically street ethnography has been used in urban sociology and anthropology as a research method purporting to study urban cultures and the lives of 'street people'. In urban milieus this presupposes the existence of a distinct 'street culture', reflecting assumptions of cultural territorialisation manifest through street inhabitants and their practices. Traditional street ethnography has usually documented microcosmic aspects of street life through thick description, delineating social interactions amongst street inhabitants and

their relationships with the wider world (Fox 1972, Weaver and White 1972) against the backdrop of an urban setting, which are then contextualised as a sort of street culture. The classic urban sociological treatise *The Street Corner Society* by William Whyte, documenting the lives of first and second generation Italian immigrants in a particular Boston slum district, is one such example.

Lacking the typical glamour of exotic locales and cultures and reflecting a gritty, media-unfriendly sociological context, street ethnography has remained a fringe research method, used mainly to study deviant behaviours amongst marginalised, peripheral, and hidden populations who make the street their home (Liebow 1967, Polsky 1969, Spradley 1970, Whyte 1943) allowing inferences to be drawn about the culture of crime and its linkages to the street environment. Accounts produced under street ethnography genre document the lives of drug addicts (Agar 1973, Gould, Walker, Crane, and Lidz, 1974, Preble and Casey 1969), drug dealers (Bourgois 1995), commercial sex workers and cruising clientele (Miller, 1995, van Gelder and Kaplan 1992), homeless (Spradley 1970), panhandlers (Lankenau 1999), beggars and street criminals (Fleisher 1995), pickpockets (Inciardi, 1977), street children (Aptekar 1988, Swart 1990), male strippers (Kaufman 2009), transvestites and queens (Prieur 1998), and boy and girl gangs (Fleisher 1998). Recent revivals such as *Gang Leader for a Day* (Venkatesh 2008) document drug gangs and their place in the underground economy. Further useful reviews on traditional street ethnography (Douglas 1972, Ferrell and Hamm 1998, Gigengack and van Gelder 2000, Weppner 1977) provide insights into the potential of its methodology to explore perspectives of life on the street.

In conventional street ethnography, the unit of observation emphasises the lives of people who inhabit urban spaces and assumes a default association with inner city locales, run down neighbourhoods, crime, and deprivation (Fischer 1973, Gulick 1973). The urban environment is only a backdrop for examining behaviours and this is consistent with traditional ethnographies of describing and narrating cultures. Its distinct methodological approach has been useful to study hidden, marginal populations but has remained an alternative, non-mainstream epistemic practice. However its rich exploratory traditions in detailing social interactions on the street and contextualising them against the broader socio-cultural and spatio-physical environment makes it suitable for the study of place. Its methodological approach is apt for observing and reporting on everyday practices and life flows on an urban streetscape, and their non-representational interpretations. Unlike conventional approaches that cleave units of observation and their processual nature, place here is examined as inseparable from the phenomenon of its consumption, and the use of street ethnography helps link emic and etic, mundane and cosmological, in understanding place and how it is practiced.

Epistemic Adaptation

Street ethnography provides unique epistemic value in studying place. In this study context, I adapted traditional street ethnography for the purposes of examining place, its consumption, and its phenomenon, as inseparable and interlinked, constituting a **phenomenologically sensitised ethnography**. I focused on place as a concept and unit of observation by modifying aspects of historical street ethnography that studied urban life, to the examination of a delimited field site without being bound by spatial constraints, territorial coordinates, or deterministic conceptual straitjackets such as retail sites or

servicescape settings. Without predetermining the actual cartographic limitations of a field site, I found that street ethnography brought clarity around place as a unit of observation, a definable and perceivable conceptual object. The unit of observation remained unclouded by distractions of sites as pre-determined retail spaces or settings as those in conventional marketing, and situates place within the broader phenomenon of consumption. Through my adaptation I have been guided by a few sensibilities as outlined below which also contributes to revitalise and extend conventional street ethnography as an epistemic tool of knowledge production.

In interpretive marketing scholarship, ethnographic methods used to study servicescapes and retail settings, have been guided by a specific territorial and spatial sensibility of what constitutes a 'site' and what is indicative of the site's 'culture'. This predetermines the nature of inquiry and the unit of observation.

In a more fluid and mobile age however conventional ethnography has undergone extensive transformation in its understanding and interpretation of the terms 'site' and 'culture'. In times of greater than ever flux, people live in 'multiplicities' (Lankshear 2002) of place and space and thus extended ethnographies are longer solely reliant upon particular geographic or demographic foci.

A field site, place, can be re-imagined beyond its geographical coordinates and territorialities as an *apriori* given. Progressive adaptations of ethnography suggest foregrounding territory against macro-level structural factors and anthropologically examining its connections beyond spatialisations (Gupta and

Ferguson 1997, Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995) for its intertextualities, its politics of centre and periphery, and attendant interrelationships (Appadurai 1986, 1990, Marcus 1986). Mainstream marketing scholarship appears not to have embraced this philosophy in its entirety given extant treatments of sites and servicescapes as territorial landscapes.

When ethnography need no longer be tightly embedded in real geography or spatiality, it creates issues around the what, who, where, and how of representation. In such a dilemma, the researcher-ethnographer constitutes the hub of investigation, internalising ethnography as a placemaking practice through their own emplacement and embodiment (Pink 2008). The field site is no longer simply dimensions or coordinates; rather it is an ethnographic place that is lived and crafted processually. As home, neighbourhood, street, retail site, refuge, or no-man's land, it constitutes the central being of examination, a place where physicality and self-being merge and can be experienced through the ethnographer's account of placemaking and self. It aids ontological consolidation and clarification of place beyond dyadic constructs of space-time. From a pragmatic managerial sciences perspective I can also interpret place as an exploration of multiple sites, a complex mixture of public, private, quasi-civic, perceived, and lived across a variety of settings and which lends itself suitably for as much a philosophical as contextual and axiological exploration of place.

Alongside broadening and expanding the notion of place and site in conventional ethnography, the study of 'culture' has also undergone changes. There is wider acceptance of culture not necessarily being a perceptible, tangible, determinate 'thing' that can be observed, measured, and interpreted. There is growing distancing from the thinking that culture is a readily apparent

performance residual within a site and its inhabitants, one that can be captured by an ethnographer who grounds a site's subjective particularities or 'insideness' against objective universalities or 'outsideness' (Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995). The need to move away from notions of spatialized cultures, identities, and the authoritarian voice has never been greater, if the interstitialities of space and culture are to be captured (Gupta and Ferguson 1997).

Preconceptions about cultural identities and connections to territory can be misleading in a fluid world, especially as people construct their own hybridized, rhizomatic identities through multiple practices and resist artificially imposed attempts to customise their position relative to territory. Obvious markers of cultural identity are often no more than temporary sutures, neither rooted in the local, nor claimed or possessed by individual and collective actors who speak for the territory. They are mobile, alterable, unstable. Ethnography needs to be alert to multiple sources of meaning making that constitutes cultural narratives (Eriksen 1995, Handelman 1977).

Conventional interpretations of culture also demand symbolism and representation, the abstraction of which can detract from a more holistic, lived, and co-experienced sense of flow and process of place. Ethnography has become more supportive of the what and how of production, more cognisant of flows rather than the 'presentism' of what is being done, the here and now (Eisenhart and Finkel 2000, Levinson et al 1996). In this study of place, the unit of observation is firmly focused on the field site and not on pre-determined

notions of culture or identity tropes. Accordingly it was never my intention to pre-suppose the existence of a 'culture' within place that was supposedly enacted as an identity project or a shared set of values and codes displayed by inhabitants. I chose instead to study place as something produced, enacted, and embodied by people who often reach beyond their personal cultural habitus and physical environment in constituting it. The street ethnography allowed room to examine ebbs and flows of everyday life and practices, offering me a sense of place and being in place beyond the physical coordinates of the field site or cultural pre-conceptions.

Adapting street ethnography demanded intense, prolonged, and multiple **multi-sensory immersion** in everyday life flows on the street. Multiple senses are an essential part of the atmospheric landscape of place, constituted through lives lived, memorialised through people's recollections, artefacts, sites, spaces, and changing practices. In interpretive studies on servicescapes, immersion has been addressed as a defining factor in studying personal and subjective stimuli and their effect on consumer experiences (Addis and Holbrook 2001, Holbrook and Hirschman 1982) and emphasised through its psycho-sensorial dimensions. People experiencing sensory immersions are only as valued as their ability to respond as consumers to sensory stimuli through marketplace actions and enactments, and that too specifically within servicescape settings. Aesthetics of store layouts and thematised spatial enclaves (Caru and Cova 2003) plunge consumers into worlds of emotional experiences (Denzin 1984), their responses to environmental stimuli observed, studied, analysed, sometimes to the detriment of holistic experiences, a preoccupation with 'immersion in banalities' (Thompson 2000).

Post-modern trends in marketing research (Firat 2001, Firat and Dholakia 1998, Firat, Sherry, and Venkatesh 1994, Firat and Schultz 1997) sensitised to challenges of constructing and maintaining symbolic identities in a world of fragmentation and hyperreality, discuss this re-enchantment as a mere instrument harnessed in the production of identities pre-desired by consumption and fulfilling its intended purpose. In the process they overestimate the influence of emotional induction (Ladwein 2002) as immersion requires a certain elimination of distance and projection of subjective operations – the ‘operations of appropriation’ (Filser 2002, Ladwein 2003) to reduce the distance from the context of experience. This reduction facilitates deeper immersion and it is suggested that consumers conjure suitable competencies in appropriating such experiences (Holt 1995, Caru and Cova 2000).

Ethnographic methods in consumption and marketing studies though are sparse on details about how consumers can conjure up such multi-sensory immersive competencies, and provide even fewer insights into how researchers can access such immersive experiences in studying ethnographic subjects without addressing their own co-presence in the ethnographic process. Drawing from its urban anthropological heritage, street ethnography addresses issues of researcher-ethnographer emplacement by positioning them as co-producers of place, by encouraging them to be more cognisant of sudden, unanticipated, and intangible multi-dimensional elements of immersive street experiences.

The variety of sensory stimuli offered by an urban streetscape is unmatched by even the richest of servicescape settings. These experiences are not only spectacularly aesthetic, immersive, and often unexpected, but also articulate

mundane everyday life practices. They are not pre-determined by marketing forces for dazzling a consumer but happen unplanned as part of everyday being. They may be partially reflected within retail settings of a field site but are also embedded in everyday occurrences and inherent in a dazzling kaleidoscope of visual, aural, olfactory, tactile, textural, and gustatory sensations.

In the field site I found visual sights that were not always aesthetically pleasing but incorporated a spectrum of sensory experiences from the mundane to unpleasant, from aesthetic, decorative to functional and utilitarian. Everyday sounds included languages, dialects, vocabulary, dialogue, arguments, protests, song and dance, chants, and often silence. Walking along the road, I was confronted by smells and aromas from pungent to fragrant. Material artefacts provided both tactile and latent sensations. Food was nourishment, sustenance, as much as it was richly imbued with memory, legacy, heritage, and attachment. None of these sensations were static. They changed in richness in tune with changing practices. They were natural, organic, unplanned. They were not confined to servicescapes or retail settings, pre-designed with a commercialised aesthetic sensibility by the marketer or intuitively anticipated by consumer. The urban streetscape is far removed from a commercial servicescape as an aesthetically landscaped object. It derives instead its aesthetic sensibilities from the perceptions of the beholder and the immersion of their emplacement.

These multiple sensory experiences intertwined in everyday practices can impel the ethnographer to rethink and reimagine urban ethnography (Adams 2005,

Ingold 2004, Law 2005, Lee and Ingold 2006, Sutton 2001, Walmsley 2005) requiring them to be one with the streetscape, to be at its centre yet remain hidden. Drawing from Baudelairean sensibilities (1964) and building on Walter Benjamin's work (1983, 1999) the ethnographer extends the role of a *flâneur*, a modern urban spectator who is both observer and investigator. The ethnographer is positioned amongst the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of the tangible and infinite, but always in possession of one's personal individuality.

As ethnographer- *flâneur* I did not simply explain the urban experience as one does a spectator, or confine myself to reportage of class or gender or other sociological markers of the urban gaze. I found that drawing from sociological, anthropological, historical, and other disciplinary ideas helped me interrogate the relationship between individual and place and balance the standpoint of a neutral observer with that of an immersed passionate participant (Harvey 2003). The ethnographer also brings modern sensibilities and an understanding of the urban experience contextualised in socio-historical changes in order to elicit and perceive hidden and intangible insights into how place shapes people (Simmel 1950). By extending this intellectual sensibility to include a more phenomenological sensitivity, one of which is to imbibe and immerse in the multi-sensory flavours of the urban place (Skinner 1962) , I was able to internalise the positionality of a placemaking participant in understanding, feeling, and sensing place as well as deconstructing and interpreting it.

Experiencing, understanding, contextualising, and interpreting everyday practice requires a cognisance of everyday multi-sensory stimuli, to acknowledge yet carefully navigate the comfort traps of the anthropological

'gaze' and rethink urban ethnography as beyond mere vision and immersive engagement. The modern urban ethnographer-place maker becomes involved in place through a form of proprioception, enhancing its phenomenological understanding. Even simple everyday acts of understanding context in the field site, practical and logistical issues of sating hunger, thirst, bodily needs, tiredness, and stress, and coping from adverse weather, seeking shelter, can all add to immersive experiences (Nast and Pile 1998) and the challenges of street ethnography.

Immersing in such experiences situated my learning and extended my practice beyond the merely observed and spoken (Pink 2008, 2009, Wacquant 2009). It made me question my own emplacement through a practical, tactile, sensorial grasp of prosaic everyday reality. It forced me look beyond categories and labels in grasping a better comprehension of the place and its everyday mundanities. The ethnographer's co-presence and sense of place is a combination of corporeal, sensual, and mental processes that facilitates subliminal and subconscious engagement with place before it can be articulated into field notes and mediated through language, vocabulary, and expressions.

I adapted street ethnography drawing from its genetic imprint and rich traditions of observing marginal and hidden populations, understanding how it equips in attuning me to participants on the street and elsewhere within the site and especially to practices involving everyday material and sensory realities. Edward Casey's work in addressing places as experiences and events with their own gathering power grounded and guided me. I treated multi-sensory immersion acts as vehicles and heuristic tools for 'gathering' those animate and

inanimate moments to build a phenomenological, fluid sense of place as it was created, participated in, and consumed. Ethnography in itself becomes a placemaking practice (Pink 2008, 2009), a co-presence of researcher and place, somatographically inscribed upon one another and invites researchers to ponder on how we are emplaced and embodied in place.

In the context of the urban field site I gradually became cognisant of a range of **spatial** settings, elements of the built environment, landscape, and also in-between spaces of being and unbeing. Conventional ethnography has always been predicated upon a site with delineated spatial coordinates which can be cartographically mapped. Marketing scholarship has embraced this topological thinking uncritically and has confined its place examinations to sites that can be pinpointed and defined clearly. Although my ethnographic work was set in a demarcated field site, I soon realised that there are were no clear defining territorial boundaries enveloping the field site and nor was it sensible to limit it to a set of specific coordinates. Further my attention was slowly but steadily drawn to a range of sites and settings that did not fall within conventional marketplace understandings of servicescapes or retailscapes and to a range of practices unexplainable within stringent boundaries of marketplace exchange but which were intrinsic to the idea of place consumption nevertheless.

Street urban ethnography challenges conventionality by extending the range and scope of spatial-functional settings within the field site, requiring ethnographers to be sensitive to elements of the immediate built and natural environment, architectural styles, patterns, buildings, and other spatial arrangements that anchor place heritage but which also stand testament to

broader socio-historical changes that delineate place chorology. Place is an event; it eventuates. It is constantly gathering and experiential and through those multiple experiences and accumulations the contours of the place change as illustrative aspects of its narrative history, a story that is woven through its multiple spatial features. The ethnographic process crafts an element of cognitive excavation in unearthing, delayering, and documenting the street's multiple historical strata, accompanying changes in architecture, physicality, and use value, and its tangible and intangible remnants through material and memorial artefacts in order to make sense of its eventuation. This is underpinned by the growing realisation that site and place much like culture is not a determinate but a fluid concept that moves along a spectrum.

In a field site that includes multiple types of commercial and public spaces, everyday life practices are mediated through a range of settings and spatial structures. These settings act as a backdrop and catalyst for multiple enactments of the cultural and commercial marketplace and the market is shaped in and through practices enacted within these spaces. It challenges the ethnographer's sensitivity to be aware of the nuances of what plays out within these settings including those not strictly defined as conventional retail settings. I discovered fascinating stories and illuminating vignettes of place in the most unexpected of settings from communal lunches and neighbourhood centres to bus stops and run-down tenements. Elements of built environment and background landscape including street 'furniture' such as signage, ornamentation, and other forms of spaces aggregated the ordinary and mundane, nondescript and spectacular.

Conventional ethnographic studies examining servicescape and retail settings in marketing literature are often consumed and preoccupied by an obsession with aesthetics and visual spectacles and address these as causalities in mediating desired consumer responses. The units of observation are absorbed into materiality of objects and the enactment of consumption mediated and transacted within the servicescape. The lens of marketplace ideology that guides the viewing and observation of all activities and events sometimes also blinds, constrains, and restricts one's views on the richer enactment of everyday practice, of street life, of grey and hidden spaces, and the construction of the streetscape as a holistic consumptive object.

Being a street ethnographer by contrast invited me through open doors of multiple settings, homes, public spaces, streets, places of worship, parks, and invites them to understand, experience, and participate in everyday life. It highlighted the natural beauty of living in all its vagaries and drew attention to place as a landscape within which life is lived, and the place produced, consumed, and enacted partly as marketplace. Place settings were an assortment of layers and dimensions of socio-cultural and economic histories. Here political ideologies were navigated, stakeholder interactions mediated, conflicts aligned or resolved, and consensus negotiated. The streetscape unfurled as a consumptive theatre, constantly changing form, shape, structure, and flow. It remained elastic, porous, malleable, yet coherent enough to hold its shape so it was comprehensive as place through form and function.

Spatial cognisance of the streetscape goes hand in hand with attunement to its **temporal** dimensions. Conventional ethnographic studies of servicescape

settings in marketing privilege the here and now. They are typically observational studies of what consumers do within a given retail environment or marketplace, intended to explain, theorise and develop implications for marketers, enrich their practical understanding of how consumers behave within these orchestrated spaces, so that these spaces may be designed and controlled better to optimise determined consumer behaviour.

Organic spaces like streetscapes on the other hand evolve and change over time, sometimes deliberately as part of an architectural, urban planning process, and sometimes inadvertently. They are bereft of pre-meditated intent in being designed as a consumptive environment although the orchestration and shaping of marketplaces within such streetscapes is no less important for understanding of consumption. Place marketers and local authorities are often reduced to picking up visible signs of 'identity' or purposes of branding and packaging organic spaces as place-products.

My challenge as an ethnographer was to be able to look beyond outward signs and snapshots of the field site and undertake a processual approach in studying and understanding its temporal fluidity and dynamism. Exploring narratives and practices beyond built environment and spatial cognisance, it became evident to me that narratives were simply pages in the book of time, documenting its passage, its effect and influence on place and in shaping its evolution.

Apart from historical time, street ethnography also made me vividly aware of daily **rhythms** of life on the street, its seasonal ebbs and flows. Rhythms orchestrate daily practices but their longitudinal nature and seasonality provide

glimpses into how they morph and mutate over time, their temporal flows leaving evidentiary marks on the streetscape. Changing demographic makeup, places of worship, servicescapes, retail settings, built environment, heritage landmarks, repurposed sites, socio-economic practices, all these are set against the broader canvas of macro-level changes. Rhythms change over days, weeks, months, and years, and across seasons. They are surface level and subterranean. They illustrate the flow of life, people, things, and practices almost in a cosmological dance.

Sometimes they are interspersed with occurrences, their hum and equilibrium punctured by sudden bursts of planned and unplanned **events** disrupting their harmonious flow. Events punctuate the streetscape with explosions of colour and noise; the landscape changes, regroups, resettles, or undergoes dramatic transformations. If the streetscape can be considered as performative theatre, rhythms and events spotlight both front and backstage activities, practices, and interactions in intersections of space, time, and energy. In my ethnography and emplacement, I was constantly moving between front and back stages, understanding different types of asocial exchanges enacted including marketplace ones.

I became sensitised to rituals and ritualised performances of history, heritage, identity, class, culture, and ideology that began to make sense as everyday practice. They brought into stark view, the existence of different lifeworlds and ideologies and how they came together within place through connections and conflicts. In subtle ways they illustrated how they came to embody

internalisation of place, inscribe placiality in people and selves, and provide insights into how place is, how it becomes, and how it comes into being.

A combined sensitivity to spatial and temporal archaeology within place, sets the street ethnography method apart from conventional approaches. Given the processual, longitudinal empirical methods, the field site became a process rather than a subject of narrative reportage. Removed from the compelling demands of presentism, and the need to explain the here and now, this method sharpened awareness about the morphology of the streetscape as an environment of practice, shaped through various socio-cultural and historical landscapes and contexts. The test of my competency as an ethnographer was not simply to capture the present as it is and occurs, but to feel, sense, grasp, and translate the obscure qualities of its 'presence' to the reader-audience (Bachelard 1936, dos Santos 1931, Lefebvre 1992). It became an expression of a deep, intense phenomenological engagement with place and a keen understanding of placemaking practice. Somewhere in that process

I began to realise my childhood dreams of becoming an archaeologist unravelling the mysteries of time, owing to the remarkable similarities between street ethnography and archaeology. Unpacking place became a form of ethnographic excavation that peeled back layers of time and filters of space to expose its pedology, lithology, chorology, materiality, and spectrality, obvious through tangible and intangible remnants of the street that had been ossified, stratified, reconstituted, or destroyed over time. The street or place was more a living than a dead site, constantly transmuting into new life forms even as it gave up some of its long buried secrets.

Archaeological excavations of street ethnography help uncover untold stories and narratives of people. Unlike a constructed servicescape that is purpose built as a shopping and marketplace environment, a streetscape or urban place brings people together as they go about their daily lives in multiple moments. In and through those daily moments, people engage in a multiplicity of **diverse practices** many of which cannot be explained by conventional definitions of marketplace behaviours but are constitutive of consumption nevertheless. These practices are moments through which place is internalised and shaped in selves. They bring together multiple actors and mediate forms of relationships between place, self, habitus, and sometimes also marketplace actors and exchanges (Peñaloza 1998, 2001, von Lehn 2006) and facilitate understanding of how place comes to be constructed and co-constituted through the streetscape.

I trained myself to observe practices, everyday moments, encounters, and interactions in everyday settings. I stepped back to reflect on patterns underlying them to understand a universe of connections and disconnections, projects, and intentions enacted within the consumption spectrum. Everyday practices represented the universality of human life held together in and through place. Place as an observed unit started to come together through the observation of practices and people's enactments of routines symbolically or non-representationally. Practices could be enacted within settings or servicescapes as a means of negotiating identity projects. They could underpin materialities to reconcile marketplace and consumer cultures. They may reinforce habitus.

Memories may be recrafted, negated, or mourned through spatial environments. Spaces may symbolise heritage, memorialise culture, or be antithetical to personal stories of identity, causing changes to practice and the way people interact with environment. Practices helped people negotiate individual or collective status, find and disown roots, connect with or distance from realities. Articulated as consumption through everyday moments, practices were often a matter of routine or habit. They demonstrated tacit and implicit knowledge, manifest through tangible and intangible artefacts. They were multitudinal ways in which people expressed themselves. In any case stripped down to their most essential, they were reflective and constitutive of place and sharpened understanding.

My ethnographic competencies lay in identifying, recognising, and articulating these practices as they were without attempting to abstract or symbolise them. In alignment with a broader trend of phenomenological enquiry into the social sciences (Milligan 1998), the phenomenological sensitivity that imbues street and place ethnography opened up my attention to mundane practices and subjective experiences of the lifeworld , (Lagenbach 1995, Schutz 1996, Seamon 1979) not always involving the mediation of material objects or transactional ideologies. My adaptation of street ethnography helped marry lifeworld and social world (Gregova 1996, Spiegelberg 1982), combining tacit, implicit, everyday actions to broader structures, aiding theory development through repeated recontextualisation.

Street ethnography requires a holistic and pluralist approach to observation, reportage, analysis, and interpretation of multiple practices, articulations, and expressions. The ethnographic process positions the researcher as a compass around which to orient an assemblage of **multi-vocal perspectives** and heteroglossic life narratives generated from multiple ideologies that intersect on the street.

The urban streetscape is a diverse mix of sentient states. It is emblematic of a changed world wherein globalisation, postcolonialism, and deterritorialisation result in places that are '*politicised, culturally relative, historically specific, local, and multiple constructions*' (Rodman 1992:641, 2003:203). Such a site presents polyphonic, polysemic, multi-vocal, and multi-local perspectives and requires capturing through multiple narrative efforts and a multi-ocular gaze in exploring its textured richness. A street ethnographic approach of studying context and phenomena, site and practice, as inseparable and intertwined allows for melding ethnographic observations with phenomenological sensitivity. In adopting such a practice I was able to transcend obvious signs, symbols, and representations in order to interrogate underlying narratives.

I was inspired by overt and covert ethnographic methods used in traditional street ethnography which have been honed through the practice of observing hidden, peripheral, and marginal populations and used it to a diverse spectrum of voices and vocalisations. I became attuned to look beyond observations and discourses and seek out that which is not seen or spoken, the aporetic, nuanced, and silent worlds of meaning, that helps capture the rational and subliminal instincts behind obvious practices of life on the street. I got into a

habit of crafting a constant dialogue between what I heard, saw, observed, and what I felt and thought. I used this dialogue to deconstruct meanings of home, street, place, culture, practice, and identity, empower multiple place voices, and facilitate a more decentred analysis and interpretations of perceptions (Luckman 1973, Masso 2011).

Through multiple, constant iterative and non-linear processes, I synthesised and reconciled introspection, transcription, inscription, and thick description into a coherent narrative in order to access the structures of significance underlying them (Geertz 1975). Through juxtaposition of structures with multifarious historical, technological, and ideological influences, the emic and etic was linked, thus facilitating understanding consumption of place through platforms, practices, and actions through which people navigate their lives and negotiate its meanings. By moving beyond the comforting and obvious markers of 'culture', seeking to uncover stories of place through perspectives, and giving voice to respondents, I was able to reposition street ethnography as a mature, grown-up alternative to projections of a Western, imperialist voice embodying the authoritarian gaze of the informed outsider as highlighted by critical anthropology.

In adapting street ethnography the choice of a rich urban streetscape as field site required multiple methods of data capture. While demonstrating fidelity to its classic ethnographic roots, my research design was also willing to embrace contemporary thought in critical and cultural anthropology and borrow from more eclectic tools to interrogate place (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). A richer and more comprehensive **methodological toolkit** was necessary to excavate

the richness of the streetscape, its diversity of practices, interactions, peoples, and to comprehend the place. It built on classic ethnographic field observations and supplemented them with creative methods used to study the local, akin to an 'ethnoscopic' journey (Holbrook 1998). Street ethnography encompassed a range of data capture methods in a continual process of triangulation, validation, and verification (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, Lincoln and Guba 1985) which helped layer and texture multiple narratives and street voices complementing one another. It required me to be adept at supplementing classic field observation techniques with other qualitative methods judiciously used in order to mine the richest possible data while balancing one another's shortcomings.

The purpose of carrying out an ethnography is also to produce an ethnographic project which in any social situation involves place, actors, and actions (Spindler and Hammond 2000, Spradley 1980). It is both process and outcome. The foundations of such a project is built on principal characteristics of what constitutes any good ethnography, extended participant observation, long periods of field work, immersion in site, openness towards collecting and absorbing information about people and activities, fidelity to thick descriptions, and recording extensive observations.

During the initial stages, the ethnography is not led by specific hypotheses or grand categorisations but instead underpinned by foundations in **classic field observation methods**, tried and tested for socio-phenomenological examinations of sense of place and being in place. Observations are the most natural way for gaining access to experiences and unfolding events on the

street. Through emplacement, positioning, immersion, and physical interactions, I was able to observe, participate, document, and co-produce place by uncovering multiple layers and hierarchies of street life (Gould, Walker, Crane, and Lidz 1974), its practices, processes, and stories. Thick descriptions of observations, their meanings, and actions, facilitated contextualised interpretation or diagnosis of knowledge gained (Geertz 1973).

The drawbacks of observation methods are that they do not afford the ethnographer the vantage point of insider knowledge and provide very little guidance on how the emplaced experience is corroborated or shared by respondents. Solitary ethnographic observations can be limiting in perception and may fail to capture multiple interpretations. It is imperative for the ethnographer to be both friend and stranger during observations in order to balance subjective biases and opinions and avoid projecting them on the subject population (Fetterman 1989). There is a need to assess challenges and issues around going 'native' with the realisation that observed informants and participants do not always self-reflect or critique their own motives for actions or opinions. In order to access informants' concurrent experiences and interpretations that cannot always be captured by classic observations, it is often necessary to decontextualize oneself from the setting and access those opinions under more synthetic conditions.

This is where **interviewing techniques** helped, especially the in-depth variety, as they facilitated deeper and more meaningful conversations, provided access to insider perspectives, interpretations, and deeper social interactions (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, Seidman 1998). The spoken word is sometimes privileged

over actions in conventional ethnography, relegating observations to the role of framing the context rather than driving the research study. This is especially true in cultural theory approaches in consumption scholarship where interviews dominate over observation methods as primary data collection techniques (Arnould 1989, Belk, Sherry, Wallendorf 1988, Penaloza 1994, Holt 1995). Formal sit down interviews with key informants regulated by structure and control (Bernard 2000) provides comprehensive background information, helps contextualise and interpret history, illustrates key moments in processual life of the street, fills knowledge gaps, and provides insights about lived experiences on the street.

In-depth interviews can also be useful phenomenological tools as they enable ethnographers to transcend the obvious and seek explanations beyond the apparent and access biographical and subjective knowledge (Holstein and Gubrium 1995, Seidman 1998). Key informants themselves can be critical actors or catalysts shaping historical events. They can mediate formal and informal networks, power alliances and dynamics, and vocalise authority. Their views on place, power, subjectivities and standpoints can be teased out through the judicious use of open-ended grand tour questions (McCracken 1988) and comparative interpretations can lend credence to polyvocal perspectives discussed earlier (Clifford and Marcus 1986).

Interviews can also be limiting to an extent as they remove people away from their natural environment and delimit spatial practice. Interviews are static, social awkward encounters staged in artificial settings. They interfere with natural rhythms and flows of place. Key informants may manipulate and distort perceptions. Within an urban street setting, the privileging of word over

action can be detrimental to the placemaking process as it may hinder ethnographers from excavating underpinning ideological meanings implied but sometimes not explicated by interview data, creating artificial schisms between phenomena and context (Spradley 1980).

Under conditions of having to balance observed gaze and spoken word and articulating it as written empirical material within the immediate challenges of the street environment, the ethnographic process can augment writing up raw data, field notes, and transcriptions, alongside reflections and theoretical journals. The simultaneous process of **reflection** and writing or recording thoughts and ruminations helped me capture concomitant insider and outsider views. Empirical material began to be generated within a reflexive framework and all aspects of its production (Loffland, Snow, Anderson, and Loffland 2006). This helped avoid the trap of 'data-isation' of theory development (Alvesson and Karremann 2011). Instead of constraining me to explore a theory-data 'fit', it encouraged me to consider the entire ethnographic process as interplay between established theory and creative empirical material. The ethnography is both the subject and object of study (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995) and theory development is in terms of construction rather than verification (Alvesson and Karreman 2011, Alvesson and Skoldberg 2010).

I maintained a rudimentary reflective journal, sometimes written, sometimes spoken which helped me to make sense of my empirical work. The journal and the process of constructing it helped capture aspects of immersion, introspection, autobiographical, and autoethnographic elements, and aided me

in crafting 'resonances', little scaffolding steps that I could use to contextualise aspects of data with my own personal experiences and observations. Many elements including attitudes to shopping, material artefacts, ways of life, the immigrant experience, food and culinary practices, all fell under this heading.

Introspection enriches multi-sensory immersion as it traverses multiple personal states (Gould 1995, 2006, Holbrook 1995, Hirschman 1992, Wallendorf and Brucks 1993). Autoethnography elides distinctions between ethnographic process and product, self and other, researcher and researched subject (Chang 2008, Ellingson and Ellis 2008, Ellis and Bochner 2001, Ellis 2004, 2009) and locates ethnography between the interiority of autobiography and exteriority of cultural analysis (Tedlock 2000) in constructing the ethnographic self (Coffey 1999). Autobiographical memories drawn from respondents also add to the interplay of material, creating and resolving 'mysteries' that open new horizons or reconcile gaps in existing ones. Despite not having any prior first hand familiarity with the field site, I was able to 'emplace' myself through these mutually connected and introspective thought scaffoldings by contextualising data with my own personal resonances.

Some shortcomings in ethnographic observations and interviews can be compensated for by the use of other complementary tools drawing from rich traditions in anthropological methods of data collection (Collier and Collier 1986, Hodder 1984). **Narrative life stories, oral histories, and in-home interviews** can be free flowing, helping capture impressions, subjective experiences, memory flows, and reconstructed emplacement that recalls how place and self are mutually imbricated in people (Smith and Watson 2001).

Narrative stories or life history methods are often used to frame stories in marketing (Deighton and Narayandas 2004, Goodson 2001, Hopkinson and Hogarth-Scott 2001, Thompson 2004) through the use of idiographic knowledge of situated, socio-culturally linked human behavior (Belk 1995, Fournier 1998). I found them a useful tool in capturing unprocessed top-of-the-mind observations and stream-of-consciousness central to memorialized reconstruction of place. Through positioning and distance, life stories helped delineate deeper relationships among people and place. Through random, non-linear recollections, I was able to document place practices, and contextualize the streetscape against meso- and macro-level socio-cultural and historical events. It gave me a ringside view of place evolution through my respondents' eyes recreated through insider perspectives.

Somewhat in contrast, the **street intercept interviews** were a quick, effective, and spontaneous way of information capture from the 'man-on-the-street'. Street intercepts comprised of random encounters with people on the street and initiated conversations about people's engagement with the streetscape. These methods are an extempore gauge of perceptions, thoughts, observations and feelings shared, and often elicit hidden nuggets of information that could be easily missed by conventional empirical methods. They capture a wide cross-section of voices and perspectives as opposed to a deliberate construction of a frame of reference and the subsequent identification, selection, and interviewing of respondents who fit within the sampling frame.

Intercepts capture the dynamism and fluidity of the streetscape. They provide an interesting counterpoint to traditional ethnography that purports to study people, cultures, and territories under assumptions of territorialized culture, a static quality that grounds a neutral observer's viewpoint, and a unit of analysis constrained by identity tropes. Intercepts facilitated free flow capture of street life without and beyond cultural markers, helped excavate people's perception of place irrespective of their particular circumstances, and helped me build rapport and establish familiarity on the field site.

While intercepts are useful for interviewing random strangers, '**go-along**' **methods**, a variation of the traditional **ethnographic 'hanging out'** with key informants, is useful in understanding phenomenological structures of lived experiences (Becker 1961, Duneier 1999, Hochschild 1989). I accompanied people as they went along their natural everyday business and/or hung out at events by gaining insider access, adapting the role of active participant-onlooker-observer (Kusenbach 2003). I developed trust and long-term relationships with select respondents in order to gain access to deeper, richer, and more personal experiences within their personal spheres and spaces. I found it particularly useful to observe and gain insights into the textured nature of *in-situ* spatial practices, routinized habits as people engaged in them in place, especially in public areas not easily accessible to me otherwise.

Walking along is in itself a sensory immersion (Ingold 2004, Lee 2004, Wylie 2005) and captures the immediacy and spontaneity of unfiltered, syncopated rhythms of urban life as people see it in all its depths and intensity. People tend to be less guarded, more relaxed as they go about their natural routines within a natural ambience. I become emplaced within the mobile habitat of informants,

gaining access to practices as they unfold in real time and space across multiple private and public realms. Carried out in conjunction with memory recaptures and autobiographical walk-about methods, the go-along method reconstructs the streetscape across time through the practices, eyes, and memories of respondents. In the process I can unlock personal biographies, highlight links between place and life histories, and gain insights into how people and place lend depth and meaning through one another through the medium of mundane routines and practices.

Go-along method is particularly suitable for the study of place as it facilitates proactive capturing of lived experiences, actions, and interpretations. It reveals the web of connections amidst people inhabiting the street, provides first hand experiences of how people situate themselves within the social-phenomenological landscape, and interact through distinct spheres of reality (Lofland 1998). From a more practical point of view, go-along methods offer a worm's eye view of the socio-spatial architecture of the streetscape and surrounding neighbourhood. It enables me to glimpse the private and communal dynamics behind spatial interactions (Carpiano 2009), thus reconstructing the social architecture of the streetscape.

From a situational point of view, the go-along method strikes a balance between the neutral, solitary position of the transient ethnographer-observer and the grounded, intimate, knowing, participant. It helps hybridize interviewing and observations by anchoring observations while freeing up some of the restrictions of artificial decontextualized interviewing. It brings to life a true

phenomenological sensibility of being in place by focusing on aspects of human experience often hidden to neutral observers, exploring the interplay between structure and agency, place and self.

Other complementary techniques such as **photographs, audio-visual recordings** and **archival and documentary research** were useful in constructing a three-dimensional processual picture of the streetscape. A phenomenologically sensitized street ethnography focuses as much on inhabiting people and enacted practices as it does on the history and configuration of the street, its processual being, its genotype and phenotype. To prevent the ethnography from being confined to the 'here-and-now' method of neutral observation and reportage, a comprehensive, historic, and contextual understanding of place and its vibrations is essential. Photographic methods are useful to convey *in-situ* spatial proximities, integrate images and text, and communicate phenomena and context holistically. Still photos can be supplemented by media recordings in documenting multi-dimensional real-time experiences, conveying atmosphere and sound.

Audio-visual recordings provide valuable impressions of the physicality of the space and its aesthetics. Audio-visual methods enrich field notes, textual descriptions, and the written word by conveying an immediate understanding of reality, especially those encounters of heightened emotion and intensity such as street events. They capture moments on the street both still and dynamic, its rhythms, cadences, and moods, texture and colour of street events. They augment and magnify multi-sensory immersion, capture the mood of the streetscape, and enrich the researcher's sense of being in place and thus their

placemaking practice. They document visual and material culture (Schroeder 2002), social realities (Rabinow 1986), and observable marketplace exchanges (Penaloza 1998, Penaloza and Cayla 2006) on the street. They also constitute important cultural artefacts in themselves as they capture the street as a macro-consumptive place atmosphere through its spatio-architectural dimensions. The deployment of audio-visual methods has to be exercised with judgment, discretion, and sensitivity.

Archival and documentary sources of data including historical and secondary literature helped chart the evolution and metamorphosis of the streetscape. They aided reconstruction of the historical notion of place, capturing its processual nature and ebb and flow of time. By juxtaposing archival, historical data with broader socio-historical phenomena, I was able to delay the archaeology of the site by uncovering elements stratified and ossified by time. These documents added historical perspective to understanding of the place and its socio-historical construction and representation. As all history is relative and often uses current values to understand the past and vice-versa, historical documents render the past intelligible in understanding how the present is shaped.

Empirical Data Set

A range of empirical methods outlined in the research design were used as part of the methodological toolkit in compiling the empirical data set. (Appendix 1)

Field work commenced around February 2010 and was integral and inseparable to field site choice selection (Appendix 2). Intensive fieldwork was undertaken for approximately two years,

spread out over the calendar year across months and days of the week with prolonged trips made during festival and wedding seasons. Follow up visits were and continue to be made up until time of writing and through.

I used multiple data capture methods. I used field observations and immersive experiences as a way to familiarise myself with the streetscape and also establish familiarity with residents and business owners. Intense periods of immersion also included all night walk-about and go-along methods. Field observations were intended to capture the changing nature of the streetscape. Observations were done mostly during the day but also often during night and included solitary walkabouts, random encounters, personal engagements on the street, and a night patrol with Leicestershire constabulary officers. I observed elements of built environment, streetscape, signage, street furniture, street art, people, clothing, language, behaviours, practices, multi-sensory impressions, conscious and unconscious rhythms and flows of street life.

I built personal relationships with several long-time residents, many still continuing to live in the area but some having moved away. They became integral to the stories I was telling. I saw them as people with individual histories beyond those of class, race, colour, or ethnic connotations. They gave generously of their time and space to me. These people were from different backgrounds but connected in some way to Belgrave. From white working classes to white middle classes, from Caribbean, Portuguese, Somalian, to Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi immigrants, to those who were caught in-between spaces of conflicted cultures and identities I drew from residents, visitors, tourists, shop keepers, street crowds but also key informants

like local authorities, councillors, business, community, and church leaders, local retailers, business and community federations, associations, and networks, civic and constabulary authorities among others.

Interactions with people consisted of multiple long interviews, life stories, sharing events, participation, and memory walks. I was invited into their homes, their places of work, their gardens, kitchens, sheds, special occasions, everyday lives, festivities, celebrations, and funerals. I carried out street intercept interviews with street visitors, shoppers, local residents, employees and small business owners, neighbourhood and community centres, passers-by, and festival crowds.

I tapped into oral histories and narrative life histories of long-time residents over repeated visits. I interspersed them with memory walks when many current and past residents walked along with me recreating and reflecting memories. I went along walking with residents during everyday activities such as shopping, buying groceries, special occasion purchases, prayers, cooking, banking etc. and hung out was at weddings, festival celebrations, theatre and performance events, prayer meetings, special celebrations, and a funeral. I also hung out at a very violent political protest which also saw one of the largest riot policing operations in the country. Audio-visual recording was deemed too dangerous and on police advice I only made field notes.

Observations, field notes, interview recordings, and transcriptions were supplemented with photos and video recordings. The streetscape provided ample opportunities for visual data including architecture, built environment, day

to day activities, retail frontage, as well as events, celebrations, and festivals that captured the colours and sounds of celebrations on the street. Historical, archival, and secondary data were sourced from public libraries, local council, historical archives, oral histories collections, parish council records, and other archival data on local environment. The documentation was useful in reconstructing life on the street as it underwent periodical and systemic changes over the decades.

Carrying out fieldwork on a busy urban road and side streets was not always conducive to immediate transcription and transference into field notes.

Observations were transient and intercept interviews fleeting, subject to vagaries of traffic, weather, crowds, and seasons and therefore initial impressions were captured as raw notes later to be recollected, memorised, and written up. Personal audio recordings were also useful as aide-memoires in noting down initial impressions. Field notes were supplemented by the maintenance of a reflective journal with appropriate theoretical and conceptual appendices. A rough categorisation methodology was applied to the notes as they were written up and revisited periodically.

The field work generated a continually developing data set of empirical material that was categorised, labelled, and coded as work in progress. A rough quantification of the data set is as follows: typewritten, single spaced, double sided notes exceeding 5MB which included written up field notes of observations, immersions, impressions, random street encounters, incidents, memory walks, go-along methods, and a range of informal and semi-formal

social interactions; in excess of 500 random conversations and street intercepts ranging from 2-15 minute average interactions; in excess of 1000 hours spent with around 30 core key respondents as the basis of in-home discussions and participant interactions; around 70 key interviews conducted with key informants involving shop owners, traders, business associates, local councillors, averaging 30-120 minutes; around 50 shorter, more informal discussions / interviews conducted with shop owners and traders, occasionally ranging over 2-3 visits on average; in excess of 100 pages of handwritten notes recorded from historical data including archival data, parish council records, and archaeological society notes (computers were often not allowed into these premises); around 40 double sided sheets of narrative / oral histories; over 500 voice notes including phone aide-memoires; about 15 hours of video recordings of festivals, celebrations, and such, and in excess of 1500 photographs of life on the street.

The writing up was a cyclical and iterative process, data and literature interacting constantly (Appendix 3). As the literature and reading evolved, the data organisation also evolved. Temporary codes, labels, and subheadings were applied to classify the data as part of a manual coding process. Temporary codes were around categories of people initially using sociological markers such as class, ethnicity, gender, and age and later on expanded to include types of people including residents, shop owners, authorities, and general public. As the data expanded and the literature evolved, the coding took on a more fluid nature, categorising and theming around practices, changes in flow and affect, and inclusion of material artefacts.

The temporary and flexible sutures helped organise and thematise the data along emergent clusters providing understanding of shared meanings (Kates 2002, Patton 2002, Strauss and Corbin 1998). The study design was emergent and was strongly data driven with the ethnographic empirical material constantly used in an iterative process of interaction, alteration, and iteration, (Marshall and Rossman 1999, Spiggle 1994, Sutton and Staw 1995). In that respect, the research design borrowed some elements of grounded theory married to ethnography in the study of consumption (Pettigrew 2000) in the sense of allowing the study to be led and guided by the data. Ethical conduct of research processes were observed at all stages (Appendix 4). Respondent confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy were maintained at all times. Names where retailers, local business people, and other authorities could be identified were masked with initials. The local MP's office refused an interview.

Over the years, I became an integral part of the street scene developing familiarity with many of the residents and inhabitants while maintaining an objective distance with the transient population on the street. I built long term personal relationships with respondents who did not always understand the academic basis of the research but were willing to help. Over time they became dear friends allowing their lives to be shared with me. The combination of attachments, affect, personal introspection and critical reflection, as well as strong autobiographical and autoethnographic elements helped me become an integral part of the placemaking process. Overall the data collection process and fieldwork were pleasant and safe but the entire journey had more than its share of momentous occasions, events, causes for concern, and emotionally intense encounters that were personally moving.

Ethnographic Field Site and Context

Selecting a field site to conduct an ethnography to study place as a central ontological question, requires careful thought. Considerations would account for place as a concept and context that can be investigated beyond territory, spatiality, or pre-determined notions of culture or identity. Contexts are critical because they provide a lens with which to explore theory and give theoretical stories veracity and texture. They are always suitable for studying something; a 'something' that often eludes and puzzles but one that is intuitively apparent as holding out the promise of discovery of a novel construct or relationship

(Becker

1998, Wells 1993), an intuition informed by prior scholarship or 'theoretical sensitivity' (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Contexts are also important in themselves. Contexts invite description, excite comparison, engage emotions and senses, stimulate discovery, open up extant theoretical biases, and are opportune for 'revelatory incidents' (Buroway 1998, Emigh 1997, Fernandez 1986, Fiske 2004).

Contexts are considered theoretically significant in marketing and consumption scholarship although unlike their counterparts within rational choice paradigms, interpretive contexts have struggled to establish legitimacy for their managerial relevance. Interpretive cultural approaches in consumption research do not often explicate the importance of contexts for generating theoretical insights

(Arnould, Price, and Moisio 2006). Detractors critique the field as over-absorbed exercises in intellectual self-indulgence where contexts are seen as ends in themselves (Lehmann 1999, Simonson et al 2001) rather than contributing to theory development. To counter, Arnould and Thompson (2005) argue that cultural theory approaches study *in* consumption contexts to generate new theoretical insights.

By texturing conventional behavioural narratives with the richness of social and cultural interpretations, and broadening focus of investigation on neglected aspects of experiential, social, and cultural dimensions of consumption in context (Belk 1987a, 1987b, Holbrook and Hirschman 1982), cultural theory approaches have highlighted the relevance of contexts for wide ranging implications in consumer behaviour, lifestyle and cultural marketing, and identity branding (Holt 2003). 'Good' contexts would be those that are equally stimulating to researcher and audience alike, be culturally significant and sociologically rich, but more importantly, fit theoretical domains that can support an array of theoretically compelling perspectives for a wide audience (Arnould, Price, and Moisio 2006). An exciting variety of research contexts are also managerially significant for applied market research (Frank 1997, Osborne 2002).

Servicescapes, marketplace settings, and other place related contexts however have much greater scope for being widened than those found in conventional marketing scholarship and several calls highlight the need to select research settings that are contextually richer, complex, challenging,

socio-historically significant, and provide opportunities to theoretically explore and push boundaries in practices, consumptions, and other types of marketplace exchanges than currently being addressed in consumption scholarship (Wright 2002). More importantly place related contexts should also be able to extend the scope of marketing and consumption beyond the dominant logic of market capitalism and commercial ideologies to include a range of types of consumptions, objects, behaviours, and public goods including public space (Sargesan 2002, Sherry 1990, 2000). The choice of an urban spot as a field site is intended to meet some of these aims.

An urban road as field site choice instead of a typical place setting like retail store or servicescape is deliberate as it provides opportunities for a range of theoretical explorations in marketing, consumption, and settings, the interpenetration of public and private, enactment of practice, and ultimately the role of place in consumption scholarship. Urban streetscapes constitute a rich setting as consumption context outside of marketplace transactions. Multiple ideologies and interpretations intersect here, forming an important cultural field and text in their own right (Warner 2002). Urban main roads are more than urban agglomerations. They are the focus around which urban neighbourhoods coalesce in modern, multicultural cities and provide vitality to urban spaces (Pryor and Grossbart 2005). They emerge out of neighbourhood development and sometimes grassroots level urban regeneration.

Urban main roads provide important arterial connections into and out of the city, spatially regulating traffic flows and movement of people and vehicles. They are gateways to urban and suburban neighbourhoods and communities. They are

the site of small and medium sized businesses, civic fora, and other public spaces. They support local economic interests, especially small family businesses and act as a platform to support events, functions, festivals, and other celebrations. Urban main roads also make unique, multiple socio-economic and cultural-historical contributions. They maintain and embed a sense of community within the local area and often being the home of migrants and minorities, facilitate transnational connections through diaspora networks. They support enterprise and entrepreneurial activity through employment generation, and retain capital and investment within the local community. A transformed and revitalised urban main road can also often be the catalyst for economic regeneration and maintenance of property values, tax bases, and the preservation of investment and infrastructure within local communities.

Urban roads are important resources for preserving local culture and heritage because they form a lynchpin around which neighbourhoods and neighbouring streets develop. A unique mix of architecture can be found here as traditional heritage buildings are repurposed and their spaces reused as the built environment mutates through contours of neighbourhood demographics, even as the neighbourhood itself evolves through constant changes of migration, urban decline, regeneration, and gentrification. Multiple spaces on the urban road help preserve cultural practices and traditions of surrounding neighbourhood enclaves whose characteristics they come to embody and reflect over time, strengthening feelings of communal harmony and multicultural social melding.

Arterial urban roads supporting a thriving socio-commercial life are a common feature in most UK cities and are major visitor attractions in themselves as they

evolve into shopping destinations and make important contributions to the visitor economy. They sometimes take on the demographic and socio-cultural characteristics of the neighbourhood and become branded as exotic or ethnic enclaves commodified through tropes of branding and cultural identification. Some rare instances of urban spaces have been addressed as consumption contexts in mainstream marketing literature but these are more in the genre of settings for the enactment of identity projects or marketplace mechanisms and are confined to examinations of urban shopping malls (Maclaran and Brown 2005), gentrified spaces (Ilkucan and Sandicki 2005), or neo-bohemian neighbourhoods (Ozalp and Belk 2009). Scholarly examinations are relegated to marketplace transactions or explorations of how people come to possess a certain type of socio-cultural capital essential for negotiating and shaping marketplace mechanisms. Within mainstream marketing, theoretical explorations of urban roads as contexts in themselves are rare.

Outside of this, some instances of socio-anthropological and literary explorations of urban roads include roads as pilgrimage destinations coloured by remembrance, memory, and nostalgia such as Cowley Road in Oxford (Attlee 2007, Skinner 2005), Brick Lane in East End of London (Gavron 2005, Hall 2005, Liechtenstein 2007) and 'Banglatown' (Dwyer and Crang 2002; Crang, Dwyer, and Jackson 2011).

In the context of marketing and consumption studies, urban roads are interesting settings for an array of marketplace and socio-economic exchanges, dialectical tensions and interplays between different marketplace actors negotiating socio-cultural, political and economic meanings. The enactment of these interplays, tensions, meanings, and exchanges are marked by different

forms of cultural, structural and cognitive embeddedness (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993, Schumpeter 1950, Zukin and DiMaggio 1990).

Urban roads are fluid, dynamic spaces subject to constant change while paradoxically also being the sites of settled, tight-knit communities whose socio-cultural and economic capital is well embedded locally. These embedded spaces support markets, marketplaces, and other asocial forms of market exchange (Granovetter 1985, Lichbach and Seligmann 2000) rarely addressed in marketing scholarship because they do not fit conventional understandings of what constitutes a market or consumption space or servicescape. Barring some exceptions (Frenzen and Davis 1990, Sherry 1990), many marketplace contexts and settings lack even permanent architectural or spatial structures (Belk et al 1998, Penaloza 2000, Penaloza and Gilly 1999, Sherry 1990).

Current examinations of a consumption sites or spaces in marketing are typically explorations of marketplace structures along two dialectical dimensions

– structures that exist on the formal, rational, and utilitarian to informal, reactive, and transient continuum and functions that exist on the axis of an economic, rational, transactional to a more festive, hedonistic, and experiential exchange one Sherry (1990). Consumption as an activity is still studied as a reductionist view of marketplace exchanges within the dominant logic of market capitalism with little emphasis on extra-economic dimensions or everyday practices that constitute consumption.

The use of an urban streetscape would extend the type and form of consumption setting and context since the examination would focus on a range of everyday practices that broadly constitute consumption of which marketplace exchanges would only be one. A range of everyday interactions of actors, practices, and phenomena can be examined, a variety of marketplace structures and exchanges can be explored, and the place itself can be studied as a live, continual theatrical performance and not as a static container of spatialized street cultures.

Urban roads also comprise a range of public, private, and quasi-civic interstitial spaces, the interpenetration of which provides glimpses of how consumption as a practice is played out through actors and structures. As a socio-cultural study the streetscape is a vehicle that draws together the strange and familiar, anonymous and identified, material and ethereal, corporeal and imaginary (Lofland 1998, Milligan 1998), a territorial, socio-psychological space. It is a cultural theatre, a stage for ritual and interaction (Kostof 1992) where multiple textured narratives of attachment, ideologies, and practices shape the site, its normative patterns and principles.

As a phenomenological space and site of ethnographic study, the streetscape brings together a broad sweep of aesthetic, interactional, lived, spatial, temporal, cognitive, and affective contexts within its atmospheric landscape. Its richness and complexity offers ample potential for an enriched application of street ethnography in understanding, perceiving, and conceptualising phenomenological place through consumption.

Critical Reflexive Ethnography as Process and Product

As both process and product of empirical methods, this study has been crafted as a critical reflexive ethnography through stages of field work, data collection, inventory, analysis, and writing. Critical reflection has been an emergent aspect of the study, an organic process grounded in the need to manage multiple theoretical, methodological, and analytical challenges, to reconcile varying norms, narratives, and practical dilemmas of interdisciplinary thinking, and more importantly to position me as researcher-ethnographer-placemaker amongst the multiple ideas and perspectives emerging from the field site. That critical standpoint has also been instrumental in shaping and refining the parameters of this study and providing clarity to the units of observation and analysis.

This critical reflexive sensibility has been grounded in related theoretical and methodological disciplinary developments in research and knowledge production (Charmaz 2006, Guba and Lincoln 2005, Olesen 2005) that view critical approaches as a welcome effort in bridging gaps between objectivism and relativism (Johnson and Duberley 2003, Tedlock 2000). Critical traditions have made some inroads into broader management research, developed to the point of being considered oppressive, rigid, inflexible, institutionalism (Brownlie 2006). In comparison, they are very marginal in marketing scholarship, neither inherently developmental within disciplinary boundaries nor open to borrowing knowledge from outside (Burton 2001, 2005, Neyland and Simakova 2009).

Despite theory developments still being dominated by a variant of linear, logical empiricism (Arndt 1985, Tadajewski 2010), critical traditions across management and marketing research demonstrate a broad commitment to paradigmatic and methodological pluralism, ontological denaturalization, and a strong adherence to reflexivity in practice (Brownlie 2006, Fournier and Grey 2007, Saren, Maclaran, Goulding, Elliott, Shankar, and Caterall 2007, Tadajewski 2010, Tadajewski and Brownlie 2008, Whittle and Spicer 2008), although there is much scope to open up disciplinary space to accommodate new voices and new sources of disciplinary capital, and theorise social contexts in which marketing knowledge is produced (Brownlie and Hewer 2007, Thompson 2002).

This is especially so in theorisations of consumption, where there is growing encouragement for scholars to become more explicitly aware of analytic orientations outside boundaries of dominant narrative conventions and paradigmatic disciplinary boxes, to explain patterns of interpretive differences in relation to their disciplinary underpinnings, rhetorical conventions and assumptions, and raise new questions not represented in disciplinary maps before (Burawoy 2004, Shankar 2009, Simonson et al 2002, Thompson 2002). It enables support for performing critical theory as deliberate acts of intellectual rebellion, deploying multiple theories, inciting researchers to identify and articulate tacit ideas, ambiguities, and mysteries to guide their own judgements and evaluations about the research process.

This sensibility has inspired this study to reach beyond conventional disciplinary treatments of place and consumption and frame it as a unit of study outside of the typical traps and tropes of servicescapes, retail settings, marketplace mechanisms, or outward signs of culture and identity. Philosophical musings of place and its ontological positions vis-à-vis space, its disciplinary treatments across social sciences, the influence of human geography and non-representational theories, and the guiding hand of practice theories have all contributed to framing the study and the gradual abstraction of empirical data from codes and nodes to patterns and meta narratives of understanding.

Alongside critical theorisations, this stance has also guided the study's ethnographic methodological approach. Given the issues of neutrality, bias, and scholarly detachment in qualitative enquiries (Cohen 2000, Hammersley and Gomm 1997) a critical stance is seen to enhance objectivity, transparency, and rigour, especially in the use of ethnography.

Ethnographic fieldwork in itself is an intersubjective process, requiring interaction of various subjectivities (Geertz 1971, Rabinow 1977).

Ethnographers are placed in other people's worlds (Hall 2001), requiring sensitivity to the socially constructed nature of knowledge production (Jacobs-Huey 2002, Le Compte 2002), to the views of social actors, and how they construct social phenomena (Denzin 1999, Humphreys, Brown, and Hatch 2003). In its potential to construct a socio-phenomenological approach to knowledge and ability to empirically link part to whole, ethnography bridges the critical requirement in theory development and methodological practice (Baszanger and Dodier 1997, Kincheloe and Maclaran 2000, Thomas 1983),

thus being considered an inherently critical tradition as product and process (Amir and Burt 2010).

In adapting the urban sociological practice of street ethnography to the study of place, theorising it within the framework of consumption, and situating it as a critical epistemic form of knowledge production, a critical stance was built into practice in the context of reporting behaviours, the environments they are enacted in, and reflecting upon my own positionality and practice in the process. My presence in the field site and continued engagement with people and practices I observed was an integral part of the critical reflexive ethnographic process and its dissemination (Coffey 1999). It was a way of stepping out of the dominant unspoken ideologies of objective, scientific research (Kleinsasser 2000, Mauthner and Doucet 2003, Wasserfall 1993), to address the inherent power and control imbalance during a traditional research encounter (Bettany and Woodruff-Burton 2009), and to confront and acknowledge my own dilemmas, shortcomings, and crisis points in the empirical process as a part of the growing tradition of intellectual honesty (Bloor and Wood 2006) of social sciences research, helping me become a better, more accountable practitioner of a reflexive craft.

The reflexive aspect of the ethnography developed gradually, organically, and almost unsuspecting, unnoticed. The early stages of data collection and the empirical methodology was almost entirely guided by disciplinary influences in marketing ethnography. My attention was drawn towards servicescape settings, retail stores, and observations of marketplace actions and actors. I paid attention to the atmospherics of store environments on the road, its overall feel and vibe, type and nature of retail interactions, consumption and

marketplace exchanges and developed rudimentary codes to theme and categorise them. I spoke to shopkeepers and shoppers, conducted a few in-situ and street interviews, sought themes of marketplace exchanges, and coded them accordingly. These sets of codes changed almost constantly with growing, gradual engagement in the field.

I returned to the field after intermittent gaps balancing demands of work, family, as well as wide, eclectic range of reading, and my own reflective processes. The gaps helped me in viewing the field site anew each time while exacerbating self-doubts about the nature, quantity, and quality of data. I went through questions of whether I was collecting the right 'type' of data, in right quantities, and more intrinsic, existential questions about what it all meant.

Against these questions my observations of the data collected from consumption and marketplace ideas to atmospheric elements, aesthetics, and cultural / sub-cultural identities seemed inadequate and sometimes irrelevant.

Beyond aspects of a shopping street and obvious elements of ethnic and cultural identity, I struggled to get a sense of place from the emerging data. I iterated constantly between reading, field visits, extended periods of time, and reflection.

Upon reflection some of the more meaningful impressions began to be formed through immersions and sensory bodily engagements mediated through the sights, sounds, smells, and vibes of the field site and my responses and reactions to them. These were emerging from a range of settings and social interactions, not just from marketplace ones. The sensorial

grasp of immersion was not just a bodily, sensual apprenticeship but also a mental process before it could be mediated by language and words (Wacquant 2009) and formed an important aspect of grounding myself as central to understanding place and crafting place ethnography (Pink 2008).

Concurrent to sensory immersions was the articulation of my engagement with 'others' on the street, their experiences, practices, and how they informed the social construction of 'otherness' (Fawcett 2004). The adapted form of street ethnography allowed me to move away from a determined sociological urban exploration that is underpinned by treating territory as a static backdrop and culture as a territorialised phenomenon.

As I started to build relationships with a range of respondents and interacted with them repeatedly over a length of time, I realised that 'otherness' was not a dichotomous outcome but one that is constantly constructed and negotiated on the streetscape. By everyone. Everyone on the street was 'other' to everyone else. The ethnoscape was a mirage, a cosmetic snapshot in time, and culture was verbiage loaded with assumptions about homogenous groups sharing a set of isomorphic cultural practices.

Within a fluid, dynamic, modern, and multidimensional urban streetscape, I discovered multiple perspectives that co-existed and sometimes competed. Through the lens of 'perspectivism' (Bourdieu 1993, Bourdieu et al 1999), I was not only able to treat people as functioning collaborators and co-producers of the ethnographic project, but was able to better position myself amidst the socio-historical context of place, my engagement with people's perspectives and reflections thereupon. Combined with immersive experiences, I began to

articulate through a comparison of retrospective and prospective accounts of the geographical self a form of self-conscious reflexivity (McLeod 2003) that started to shape my view of place.

A contributing factor to the development of this critical self-reflexivity was the need to negotiate my own position against identity markers on the streetscape and the question of 'identity' underpinning my work. This was strongly connected to the choice of field site and rationalising it. The streetscape was perceived as an ethnoscape which by default created pressure to frame my project as an identity quest which theorise elements of subjectivity, its construction, and examinations of whether identity norms are de-/re-stabilising or de-/re-traditionalising (Adkins 2000, Kenway and Kelly 2000, McLeod 2003).

Identity studies are popular in marketing and consumption scholarship as they position identity as a pre-determined goal, the achievement of which is negotiated through a range of consumer actions, providing the marketing researcher the opportunity to examine such agency through positivist or interpretivist paradigms and theorise them accordingly. Studies are frequently framed around ideas of how place and space mediate consumer identity where territory is synonymous with sites of marketplace activities, identity is predetermined as an end goal, and the process of attaining it conceived of as a linear, progressive pathway.

I shared minimal ethnic-cultural commonalities with some of the major population groups on the street which gave me contextual understanding and empathy for agency, provided me with a frame of reference to understand

people and their relationship with place, sensitised me to the ritualised meaning of enacted practices, and acted as a lens and touchstone with which to orient my own position and emplacement in the field site.

However I was acutely aware that while shared cultural sensibilities can provide contextual understanding and enrich the meaning of empirical findings, they can detract from the analysis of participants and their actions beyond their respective possibilities of cultural *habitus*. They can create additional pressures for scholars from ethnic-multicultural backgrounds (Narayan 1993) to adopt a critical stance and self-positioning in order to address 'exotic' representations of culture and identity (Jacobs-Huey 2002).

My research project was never driven by researcher angst, therapeutic subjectification (Rose 1999), or a quest for a self-reflexive biological venture, validation (Giddens 1991, Doucet 2008). I did not deliberately turn my back on identity projects nor did I feel any particular pressure to 'represent' the identity voices of the people I was writing about. Gradually the empirical work came to demand an outward and inward process of developing one's self identity and voice as a researcher (Deutsch 2004, Trussell 2010) and shaping a sense of self (Mohanty 1989, Page 1989, Williams 1996).

In navigating conflicting and competing claims around identity projects, bias, my own overarching often defensive interests in issues of space and place, and the conceptual pull of geographical self, I was able to seek greater clarity in how I focused on place and practice for observation. It pushed me to seek meaning beyond identity tropes. Shared cultural understandings became a scaffolding, not a crutch and I was able to let go of that comfort zone and

explore multiple aspects of the field site in my ethnography with greater confidence.

That exploration revealed multiple aspects of 'culture' prevalent through practices. Unlike sociological and conventional anthropological encounters which assume a 'culture' that is perceptibly apparent to the ethnographically trained eye, culture is not enacted on a modern, urban streetscape as a historical artefact passively imposed upon on inhabitants. It is a dynamic outcome of place imbued with and shaped through everyday practices that cut across socio-cultural divides and stereotypes (Le Compte 2002, Wolcott 1991), a living, moving artefact, articulated and conceptualised through practice, sometimes a result of cultural *habitus* and sometimes despite it.

The more I understood people the more touchpoints I was able to find to connect to them on multiple levels across practices – the immigrant experience, the urban experience, eating, the therapeutic aspects of food and the love-hate relationship with it, frugality, financial insecurity, loneliness, ageing. All of these helped me layer the universality of practices against the socio-historic contexts enacted in place and understand how people embodied place through everyday practices and agency rather than reproducing it through disembodied cultural forces.

Related to identity was the question of subjectivity, positionality, and emotionality, the ability and sensitivity to confront my own biases and transform observations into empirical material (Trussell 2010). The ethnographic process threw up multiple shared emotional encounters which required nuanced responses, the doorway to the 'inner terrain of people'

(Watts 2008:8) beyond impression management strategies (Atkinson and Hammersley 2007). Far from clouding judgement, these emotional responses strengthened my positionality (Hamilton, Dunnett, and Downey 2012, Woodthorpe 2007), helped me acknowledge my own vulnerability and those of respondents' (Allen 2001) which in turn impacted powerfully on drawing analytical meta-narratives and representing stories.

To avoid descending into mawkish self-indulgence, I drew from introspection (Gould 2012, Stone 2009), autoethnography, and confessional tales (Ellis and Bochner 2000, Pillow and Mayo 2007, Trussell 2010) of multiple self-narratives. My personal experiences with autoethnography, combined with cathartic storytelling (Brannen 1993, Lupton 1998), field notes (Canniford 2007), reflexive accounts (Bettany and Woodruff-Burton 2009), poetry (Hill 2001), and even conversations with informants and colleagues (Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen, Liamputtong 2007) helped in making sense of what I was seeing and observing. These techniques helped foster researcher and respondent subjectivity while constituting eclectic but valuable forms of epistemic knowledge production in their own right (Hudson and Ozanne 1988, O'Shaughnessy and Holbrook 1988).

Part of crafting my own reflexivity was also acknowledging the reflexivities of my ethnographic subjects (Gould 2010), their roles as collaborators and co-producers of place and ethnography. In real time my respondents often considered their own positionality and biographically created knowledge through dialogue and practice (Riach 2009), through consciously critiquing their decision making choices (Cunliffe and Jun 2005), and taking responsibility for their own actions, thoughts, and feelings (Beckett and Nayak 2008, Takhar and

Chitakunye 2010). It became a part of understanding the universality of practices and their relationship to place in its most raw, stripped down form that allowed for the construction of multiple geographical selves.

Even when respondents were unable to self-reflect or self-critique or articulate such reflection, the lack of effort or inability in itself became part of the process of understanding place relationships and personal phenomenologies through models of self and cultural understandings (Ringberg and Reihlen 2008). I was able to acknowledge several people as *bricoleurs* and give them autonomy over their own voice without overshadowing them with objective discourses or researcher authority (Lynch 2000). By listening to respondents and encouraging them to engage with their own thoughts, I was able to elicit conscious and subconscious processes behind decision making (Woodside 2005), which also helped me build informant trust with them and generate more data.

Respondent subjectivities also emerged from other types of empirical methods such as go-along, narrative life stories, memory walks, and intercept interviews. Chance remarks and even silence provided insights into hidden practices, meanings, and subjectivities and helped me see through the veils of apparent identities and cultures and understanding more complex phenomena (Brannen 2005, Johnson and Duberley 2003, Porcino and Verhoef 2010). It helped me see place through their eyes, sensory immersions, and reflections which in turn helped me construct a three dimensional view of place as it changed and shaped through territory, history, space, and time.

Throughout the study period at different points in time, I returned to interim levels of analysis with different gradations of abstractions and theorisations. It was a constant iterative process between researcher and respondent subjectivities, a phenomenological sense of place, and observations of practice which in itself was a form of placemaking (Pink 2008, 2009) and critical analytic practice (Trussell 2010) that had to move beyond simplifications and reductionisms towards a more personal representation of social meanings, cultural spaces, and contexts (Ellingson and Ellis 2008, Holman Jones 2005, Richardson and St Pierre Schwandt 2001, Yuen and Pedlar 2009). These multiple negotiations – between immersion, identity, self, respondent subjectivity, reflexivity, and co-presence – served to clarify positionality of the ethnography itself as final outcome, a combination of the empirical process and its representation (Parry and Johnson 2007).

Positionality was a dilemma to be navigated, complicated by the need to balance insider-outsider standpoints (Cassell 2005), the ‘them’ and ‘us’ of the researched world (Brownlie 2008), and questioning myself whether I was privileged as an insider possessing a shared familiarity with my research site or I was disadvantaged as an outsider for the same (Blumer 1954, Griffith 1998, Wegener 2010). My field site was in constant flux of socio-cultural and historical contexts and had been so for decades if not longer.

It was near-impossible for me to pre-ascertain my positionality before I started my empirical work just as it was difficult for me to determine outsider-insider positions which often contradicted surface appearances and representative categories. I had to question my own biases and subjective prejudices about some of the obvious master narratives absorbed from

dominant groups and how they often intersected with my own intuitions, creating dissonances and 'crisis points' (McCorkel 2003).

These crisis points in turn provided me with opportunities to challenge some narratives, fashion my own standpoint epistemologies, confront my own biases, taking ethical responsibility for them, (Trussell 2010), and drawing generic themes in the way I considered place. Strangely but not unsurprisingly I found myself subconsciously returning to a long-standing inspiration, the indomitable Miss Marple, a creation of crime fiction writer Agatha Christie of whom I was a lifelong fan. Miss Marple's methods of deduction and induction, her ability to think laterally, to distil focus points from a mass of data, to draw parallels and resonances amongst disparate incidents and evidentiary events, and to bring extraordinary clarity to the problem at hand, helped me to return time and again to the idea of place and seeing it clearly through this mass of voices and perspectives.

The elements discussed above have helped position this adapted form of street ethnography as a uniquely critical form of epistemic knowledge production, against the broader 'reflexive turn' in social sciences research (Coffey 1999, Emerson 2001). The reflexivity helps position the ethnographer as a postmodernist (Salzman 2002), dedicated to epistemological relativism, positionality, and perspectivism, as opposed to objectivist-empiricist, situated somewhere in the spectrum of ventriloquist-reportage and activist-protagonist (Trussell 2010), consciously reflective of critical positionality but not always enacting and performative of critical theory.

The method has strengthened place ontology in embodying place as a gathering process, supported knowledge and theory building through conceptualising place, and reflects a range of respondent positions and sentient being-states across the power-ontology spectrum (Bettany and Woodruff-Burton 2009).

Towards the latter stages of this ethnography and especially during the writing up process, there was a marked transition towards a post-phenomenological, post-criticality of representation, and reflexivity acting as shibboleth, a turn to self or selves. I tried honestly and openly to address data collection methods, researcher role and interrelationships (Ryan and Golden 2006), assumptions (Hubbard, Brackett, Milburn, and Kemmer 2001, Rolls and Relf 2006), ethics and methodological rigour (Guillemin and Gillam 2004), and possible mistakes and biases (Letherby 2002, Woodthorpe 2011). The post-criticality was not about unloading emotional baggage, creating confessional opportunities (Knowles 2006, Van Maanen 1988) or blurring fragile boundaries between reflexivity and self-indulgence (Coffey 1999:133). It was more a repositioning of my research objectives (Rosaldo 2000) and inviting reader audiences to share views from research findings (Young 1996).

In some ways the analytical stages of the ethnography and the writing process was to remove myself from the self-centred bubble of the ethnographic process, away from the constant shifting between gradations of transparency and obscurity, distance and proximity, closure and openness, knowledge and surmise. With Miss Marple's spirit over my shoulder, I started to pare back the

data and distil them into essential stories, attempting to shape place through those voices and representations, layering them like a gossamer wall (Doucet 2008).

The wall was constructed through three sets of transparent curtains of relationships – my own (with my past and present ghosts); those of my respondents (and their embodied place dimensions); and my accountable audiences (self, reader, epistemic community), as a spatial and referential quality (May 1998). The metaphorical symbolism of the gossamer wall represented the sheerness of the former and the solidity of the latter to symbolise a creative way of thinking about the ambiguous solidity and fluidity of endogenous reflexivity enacted within this triadic relationship (Bourdieu 2000, Doucet 2008).

The post-criticality was set along a transition to a post-phenomenology where I attempted to focus on the essential elements of practice and place, returning them to a simpler, pared back concept of what I wanted to represent, not denuding them of the richness of identity or other symbolic representations but distilling within them those essences and presenting them as a conceptualised idea of place. I was able to move between practice, place, non-representation, and consumption with greater clarity than I had felt during the empirical process and it helped me orient my study, clarify my own standpoint epistemology, and present critical reflexive street ethnography as a reinvigorated form of epistemic knowledge production in the study of place and consumption.

Summary

This section was intended to outline research approach to the study and present the methodological and philosophical orientations behind conceiving and executing it. Empirical methods were constantly evolving, iterative, in permanent dialogue between theoretical standpoints, disciplinary influences, methodological and epistemological challenges, as well as reflective challenges. Overall it was a continually evolving process from urban sociological empiricism to epistemic adaptations of place study through a phenomenologically sensitised and critical reflexive ethnography towards a post-critical, post-phenomenological collection of meta-analytical narratives and representation of place, practice, and consumption.

IV. CHAPTER FOUR: ETHNOGRAPHY AND PLACEMAKING

This ethnography presents the findings emerging from the empirical work and addresses study objective (c) to analyse the validity of practices and non-representational methods as empirical tools in deconstructing and reconstructing ethnographic place. In this study, the ethnography is both process and product and is being used as a methodology and as placemaking practice, an essential approach to shaping, interpreting, and presenting the field site as a place construct that can be conceptualised. This ethnography is an attempt at privileging the field site, respondent voices and actions, and layers of embedded histories that add richness to the empirical work.

The intention of the ethnography is to deconstruct the field site beyond its spatial and temporal dimensions and static, snapshot approaches in order to understand and interpret how it is perceived, lived, practiced, and shaped beyond its immediate cartographic coordinates. This builds the foundation for the eventual conceptualisation and repositioning of place ontological hierarchy.

Further the ethnography also intends to reconstruct place through the lens of practices by understanding how non-representational everyday actions of living helps shape the place over time. This is done by interweaving multiple stories drawn from life experiences as narrative threads and presenting them as themed everyday practices that reflect the universality of human life. The stories capture the beauty and simplicity of ordinary lives, distil the essence of everyday living, and demonstrate that practices do not always require representation as identity or aesthetic or any other symbolic tropes, that they are rooted in place just as much as places shape them.

The presentation of these stories are themed as everyday life practices akin to the work of anthropologist Daniel Miller who adopts a similar pattern while depicting lives on the street. The theming of practices and the construction of the entire ethnography is intended to demonstrate that place can be understood through practice and through non-representational methods that capture the flow of everyday life and that these methods constitute valid lenses of analysis in deconstructing and reconstructing ethnographic place.

The theming of narratives also adds to the methodological dimension of traversing the phenomenological to post-phenomenological curve, a deliberate move from a self-centred narrative ethnographic practice to one that moves beyond phenomenological centrism to report, interpret, analyse, and theorise. Accordingly the ethnography is divided into two parts.

Part One is a simulated excavation of the field site, its historic, imagined, and cartographic boundaries unpacked for readers. Drawing from historical documents this section reconstructs the field site as real and imagined site and situates the notions of time, space, and place within its territorial and virtual boundaries.

Part Two is a themed collection of meta-narratives that bring together aspects of people's everyday lives in all its mundane minutiae articulated through routine, habitual practices. Eschewing a quest for exotica, avoiding a cultural gaze, and sidestepping the need to seek conventional marketplace explanations for everyday actions, this ethnography brings together everyday stories in a bid to seek out the beauty and richness in the ordinary. People go

about their everyday lives earning livelihoods, planning for the future, marking life's occasions, celebrating, grieving, sustaining body and soul, and attempting to make sense of their everyday lives through institutional structures and personal agency. They are faceless to the world but interesting in their own right. These are their stories, their practices, themed along the lines of Earning Livelihoods; Managing Money; Celebrating; Grieving; Eating; Being, Becoming, Belonging.

SITE, SPACE, AND PLACE

The empirical fieldwork was carried out in and around Belgrave Road, a mile-long suburban stretch in the city of Leicester (Appendix 5). It is a busy, arterial road that branches off from the city centre and proceeds towards the suburbs of Thurmaston. Belgrave Road emerges roughly from the city centre, near Haymarket Square, clock tower, and pedestrianised shopping lanes. Its cartographic origins are marked as Belgrave Gate, one of four eponymously named main gates providing access to the walled city in ancient times. The city centre is encircled by the A594 ring road, and once through Belgrave Gate, the approach proceeds roughly in a north-to-north-easterly direction, bisecting A594 at Burley's Way to the left and St Matthews' way to the right. It flows as Belgrave Road and continues as Melton Road, one of the main arterial roads from the centre to suburbs.

The road runs parallel to the eastern boundaries of Abbey Park and Fields skirting the ancient River Soar, which flows through the Park as charming brooks and rivulets. The Domesday Book historically links River Soar to the original Leicester settlement (Domesday Book Online, Martin 2003). Abbey Park, so named after the old Leicester Abbey which was destroyed during the English Civil War, still houses remnants and ruins of the Abbey, stones from which were used to build the historic Cavendish House that stands in the park. Public access and a walk through the park brings one to the Abbey ruins laid out as stones on the ground along with information signs that roughly recreate its original dimensions. The public are invited to participate in a three

dimensional puzzle combining the virtual, tangible, and creative, to recreate the Abbey in their imagination. The Park is also home to a memorial of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and houses formal gardens, a miniature railway, bandstand, a model boat lake, and other rag tag attractions which are popular with residents, visitors, students, and amateur archaeologists.

Belgrave Gate Road runs from the A594 down towards Bridle Hill Tavern to its right and the Leicester City College's Abbey Road campus to its left. Standing sentinel at just before the entrance to the actual road on the left is the St Mark's Church, a magnificent Gothic masterpiece designed by the legendary socialist architect Ewan Christian between 1869 and 1874 and boasting stained glass windows made by Holiday and Kempe. The St Marks' Church was decommissioned by the Church of England in the late 1980s and sold off. It now houses a banquet and convention centre for weddings, parties, and corporate events. The road reaches Belgrave Circle and continues on as Belgrave Road. A flyover used to drop roughly a third into Belgrave Road while branching off to the left as the B5327 Abbey Park Road. It has been demolished during the course of this study.

The starting point of Belgrave Road is approximately a 20 minute walk from the city centre. First impressions are that of a run down, grimy, roadscape displaying signs of unmistakeable urban neglect, grim, functional Victorian red brick architecture, boarded-up windows, vandalised premises, faded factory signs, and numerous struggling shops in various states of disrepair. A miniscule patch of green greets visitors on the right side of the road. It is surrounded by a wrought iron fence and hosts a statue of Mahatma Gandhi and a neglected

floral garden. The statue overlooks a boarded up red brick pre-war building with signs of the Brahmo Samaj. A lane leads off to a charmless modernist building housing the lottery funded Peepul Community Centre. A Sainsbury's supermarket once stood here. It has since been demolished, the land lying part fallow and part by a brand-new B&M discount store. The road is busy with traffic flowing in both directions. The road is flanked by numerous side streets neatly laid out with pre-war terraced housing and densely crowded with people and vehicles. The main road itself is dotted with tightly packed shops on either side punctuated by rows of traffic lights.

The road bisects at one of the major traffic lights into Cossington Road on the right, Loughborough Road roughly to the north-west, and continues northward as Melton Road where rows of small shops give way to somewhat larger, more spacious red brick houses now either run down, neglected, or converted into small lets. Some of the major landmarks on the road include the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre at the corner of Rothley Road, originally a Wesleyan Methodist Church designed and built by renowned architect Arthur Wakerley between 1896 and 1899 (SOL Online). The red brick building is constructed in Baroque style replete with beautiful Byzantine details and is decorated with terracotta and stone dressings, slate roof, and rose windows inset with coloured glass. It is now a city council-run community centre. The entrance off Rothley Street backs on to Cossington Recreation Grounds which runs parallel to Belgrave Road, intersecting it back again at Cossington Road.

Other points of interest on the road are the historic Wolsey Mills, now a care home and retirement residential centre, an old mill factory now housing the

Belgrave Commercial Centre with numerous small shops, the old British United Shoe Machinery factory off Belgrave Road, now a residential development, an old factory warehouse converted into a makeshift Hindu temple.

The road is a quintessentially busy urban thoroughfare with virtually no shade or greenery to provide relief. Other than a few bus stops, some of which are non-functioning, and a couple of filthy roadside benches, there are few places for rest. Traffic flows almost ceaselessly through the road day and well into the night. There are no signs of high street chain shops; other than a Subway, a few betting outlets, and high street bank branches, almost all the shops are small businesses. Shops are mostly ethnic businesses, selling heritage fashions, jewellery, prayer utensils, and hosting a number of vegetarian restaurants. The entrance to Belgrave Road presents a somewhat grim picture but starts to appear thriving somewhere from roughly around a third of the road, the shops and restaurants dotted with chemist, optician, photo studio, money transfer, florist, newsagent, and numerous other small businesses packed tightly against one other. The road becomes more eclectic as it moves towards Melton Road where butchers, multi-ethnic grocery stores, herbal medical shops, florist, newsagent, pubs, hardware stores, and assorted businesses begin to appear.

Cartographic representations notwithstanding, the layout of the road makes it difficult to be confined spatially to the mile long stretch as traffic, people, and shops flow into and from the adjacent areas. Rows of shops on either side of the road sell a variety of ethnic fashions, gold and diamond jewellery, prayer and household items. There are also a number of vegetarian restaurants reflecting the culinary preferences of the local populace. For the past few

decades, Belgrave Road and the surrounding neighbourhood has become associated with the 'Indian community' predominantly Gujarati Indians of East African origin belonging to the Hindu faith, who settled here. As the community's presence and influence grew and established itself, the area has taken on the spatial-cultural characteristics of an 'ethnoscape'(Appadurai 1997), sharing similarities with other urban spaces across Britain which are also home to several ethnic communities and sub-communities of assorted cultures and faiths (Dwyer and Crang 2002, Crang, Dwyer, and Jackson 2011). Belgrave's reputation as an ethnoscape has been further consolidated by the annual Diwali festival celebrations on the road, a firm feature on its cultural landscape.

Belgrave Road's ethnic aesthetics lends itself to cultural stereotyping and branding (Bryman 2004, MacCannell 1973, 1976, 1999, Meethan 2001, Pryor and Grossbart 2005, Shaw 2011), which potential the media, local authorities, and local community have been quick to cash in on. Belgrave Road is dubbed the Golden Mile, a nomenclature adapted by local authorities to brand activities around the annual Diwali festival. Similar to other Golden Mile branded roads across the country, the origins of Belgrave Road's branding is obscured in myth and conjecture.

For marketing reasons, the local community and local authorities cite the purely aesthetic, supposedly dazzling sight of jewellery shops lining either side of Belgrave Road as the reason, although privately they admit that the truth is more prosaic, the excessive number of traffic lights dotting the stretch of the road. In either case the branding effort has benefited local authorities and the local business community in attracting visitors to the area during the annual

Diwali festival. The road's brand symbolism and identity is reflected in signs proclaiming the Golden Mile as do decorative hangings on street lights displaying the One Leicester sign.

To my subjective, eye though Belgrave lacks the ethnic richness so apparent in many other ethnoscares across the country where I have lived, worked, travelled, and researched in the past years. Compared to many other similar urban areas that spatially reflect specific socio-cultural identities of their dense concentrations of ethnic populations, I find Belgrave Road far less vibrant, decaying even. This is borne out by people's opinions when they describe the situation until about a decade ago. Demographic changes and constant inflow and outflow of residents have effected rapid shifts in the aesthetic makeup of this cultural space. A few long term residents of Belgrave claim the area will always remain an 'Indian area'. However dropping visitor numbers for the annual Diwali celebrations, the ethnic shops that are noticeably becoming fewer and increasingly struggling, and the rapid demographic shifts do not support their thinking. Nevertheless the branding myth of the Golden Mile helps establish a tangible, albeit misleading and deterministic label on the area and provides easy recognisability.

Parallel to the schism between external representations and perceptions of Belgrave Road with its actual lived realities, there is also a significant and discordant note in people's identifications and interpretations of Belgrave's coordinates and territorial spatialities with its actual cartographic representations. Cognitively and perceptually, local shop owners and residents often identify Belgrave Road as only from roughly about a third of the way in

and extending all the way into about a third of Melton Road. Some include a good part of Melton Road as also being part of Belgrave while many other long-term current and former residents seem to include areas like the Abbey Park and Leicester College as part of Belgrave. Some struggle to distinguish between Belgrave and Belgrave Road. The two are often conflated.

Unsurprisingly, Belgrave's precise geographical area is still being contested (Bonney 1992) through records, documentation pertaining to regeneration plans, and also in living memories (Seliga 1998). The rough boundaries of the neighbourhood on the east are along the railway line which runs north out of Leicester, the River Soar on the west, the Belgrave Flyover to the south (excluding the St Mark's Church), and to the north, a line which runs roughly along Vicarage Lane, Checketts Road, Marfitt Street, and Gypsy Lane. The later Regeneration Programme SRB4 for Belgrave Road drawn up between 1998 and 2004 extended the regeneration area across the River Soar and included part of Rushy Mead (Seliga 1998).

The site's specific cartographic coordinates and boundaries are conflicting, confusing, and often deliberately obfuscating but Belgrave as a place is still perceivable and tangible beyond spatial boundaries and time-bound people horizons. As a social experiment I have often deliberately stopped people near the city centre or around Belgrave and asked them for directions to Belgrave and each time the responses have been different. Some give me literal directions with specific coordinates. Some look me up and down, arrive at conclusions based on my appearance and direct me to a particular area, making assumptions about my reasons for wanting to go there. Some want to

know my reasons for asking before giving me directions but the assumption is inherent and unspoken. In each case the answers are different and it seems like each interpretation of Belgrave as a place is dependent upon the orientation of their own personal human geographies. Nevertheless there is a certain unanimity in how Belgrave is cohered and comprehended by people here.

The variations in these expressions of Belgrave's human geographies is partly a legacy of the site's long established cartographic, socio-political, and economic history and partly its physical adjacency to Leicester city. Leicester, the capital of the county of Leicestershire, is Britain's 10th largest city population wise, 14th largest for urban spread, the largest city in East Midlands and the second largest in the entire Midlands Region.

Leicester is one of Britain's oldest cities with a long history dating back to Roman and Anglo-Saxon times, a legacy shared with other major urban conurbations across the country. It was the centre of a bishopric from pre-Saxon times which saw it endowed with the status of a city (William 2010). Leicester lost its city status after the Norman invasion owing to internecine struggles between church and aristocracy, a legacy only regained until after World War I. From the early to late middle ages it was a bustling market town, continuing to develop during the English Civil War and Tudor eras. The city however saw its biggest growth during the Industrial and post-Industrial Revolution caused by a huge boom in manufacturing industries (BHO, McKinley 1958).

Leicester chiefly benefited from its excellent location status, the quality of

transport, infrastructure links and networks put in place during the Industrial Revolution including a newly constructed rail and canal network. The city's rail, land, and water networks, water supplies, transport connections, and supply of cheap and plentiful coal led to a boom in factory based industrialisation and it soon acquired a reputation as a major industrial centre for light engineering, textiles, shoes, shoe machinery, and hosiery factories.

The Industrial Revolution also led to rapid urban expansion accompanied by a rising standard of living, which in turn led to a huge influx of residents from surrounding villages as well as waves of immigrants from shores near and far (Williamson 1990). It is currently a major centre for commerce, distribution, manufacturing, and services. It has excellent transport and locational advantages, has a reputation for art and culture, and is the location of several high profile hospitals and learning institutions. It also has the fastest growing urban population, one of the highest under-18 population segments accompanied by high birth rates anywhere in the country. Post-war population demographic changes in the city has been noticeable for its high degree of multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-racial make-up (McLoughlin 2012). The Commission of Racial Equality estimates that the city's ethnic minority population is expected to outstrip the white majority within the next few years making it the first city in the country with a majority ethnic population.

Belgrave has lived in Leicester's shadows for a significant part of its cosmological existence, causing constant socio-cultural, economic, and demographic changes, which is reflected in the undulating contours of its built environment and architectural heritage. Archival research, historical records,

oral histories, and other secondary data publications provide indications of a site with a rich history indicating reasons why the site continues to hold different spatial and territorial connotations for people beyond what is represented cartographically.

The area now known as Belgrave where Belgrave Road is situated was known in ancient times as Merdegrave (grove in the meadows, derived from '*mearo*' for 'marten' and *graf*' for 'grove'). It was a settlement that grew on the banks of the River Leire, now known as the River Soare, and inhabited by Britons known as the Coritani tribe. The settlement was close to a Roman road and archaeological excavations of the settlement near Talbot Inn have unearthed parts of an old bridge near Thurstaston Road that date back to the Roman times.

The settlement finds mention in the Domesday Book (1080-86), potentially as lands awarded by the king to a local nobleman, Hugh de Grandmesnil, as a reward for fighting William the Conqueror against the English (DMO, Martin 2003). The land was spread around approximately 24 acres including meadow lands. The early settlement of Merdegrave changed its name to Belgrave following the Norman Conquest, to remove any unsavoury connotations of the etymology of '*merde*' in the Old French language.

Alternatively the lands may also have been bequeathed by the Earl of Leicester during the reign of Henry II to William de Belgrave, whose illustrious family consisting of noblemen and scholars derived its name from the village. The descendants of the de Belgrave family included one of the earliest Lord Mayors of Leicester in the year 1363AD. The first mention of Merdegrave as Belgrave is

to be found in records of the confirmation of granting the church to the Abbot of St Ebrulphs Utica in Normandy in 1082AD (Hoskins 1957, Quine *unknown*, Stevens *unknown*).

Historically the area or village of Belgrave was a separate settlement from modern day Leicester, a modest village approximately one and a half miles from the city's East Gate. The settlement lay downstream from the city, astride the River Soar, at the point where the main road proceeding to the adjacent town of Loughborough crossed the river about a half mile beyond where it diverged from the main Roman road of Fosse Way, the strategic Roman highway that ran from Aquae Sulis (Bath) to Lindum (London) or from Torbay to Skegness.

Belgrave was a predominantly agricultural settlement, bounded by the river on one side and the Roman walls on the other. Historical documents suggest that much of the village remained as part of the feudal holdings and agriculture was the main occupation up until the eighteenth century when growing industrialisation across the rest of the country and the spread of urbanisation caused occupational patterns in the village to change (DMO, Martin 2003). It was only in the late nineteenth century that the settlement came to be gradually incorporated into the city of Leicester as the latter continued its urban expansion at a rapid pace following industrialisation (Williamson 1990).

Records suggest (Clark *unknown*) that the absorption of the village into the urban boundaries of Leicester was gradual but steady with further parts being added up to 1935. Parts of the area still retain some of its early agrarian characteristics with the flowing river, meadow lands, and remnants of the old

city walls, as well as the prefix –Gate attached to the various entrances that mark roads leading away from the city centre. The gates used to provide passageways for people, visitors, and traders from neighbouring villages and are considered to be of medieval origin rather than Roman. Belgrave Village or Old Belgrave, the conservation of the church, the old manor house Belgrave hall, Belgrave Gardens, the riverside, and the Belgrave cemetery continue to evoke memories of its past but its most visible urban landscape is in the form of Belgrave Road.

With growing industrialisation and the expansion of the city of Leicester, Belgrave began to attract some of the hosiery and textile mills for which Leicester made its name (Jopp 1965, Webb 1947). The area took on the form and shape of an industrial working-class neighbourhood with the relocation of factories on to the emerging Belgrave and the adjacent Melton Roads, and the slow developing pattern of side streets and terraced houses circa 1875AD to house the growing number of factory workers and migrants from adjacent villages. Many of the current houses on the road and the adjacent streets were constructed before World War I while some filling in of houses was taken up during the period between the two wars. Homes were built over some of the struggling factories such as the old Belgrave Thread Mills.

New housing developments coming up around Sandringham Avenue during the 1930s were the first indicator of a real and tangible improvement in the lives and social status of the predominantly white working class residents of the neighbourhood who migrated to the better houses. Much of the existing red-bricked terraced housing were built outwards from the city centre from 1875

onwards but displayed pitiable living conditions with poor, non-existent internal plumbing and running water facilities. The houses were grouped around small rear courtyards with shared toilets and communal water taps. Washing was done in bowls or tubs or *en masse* through weekly visits to the Cossington Public Bath Houses, now the site of a sports facility.

Moving outwards, some of the houses built later were of a better standard with improved living conditions, spacious with bigger rooms, better facilities, but still constructed in the terraced, red brick style. However many of these houses too lacked bathrooms and had to make do with outside toilets even up until 1945. House building activities were brought to a halt by the First World War as the country concentrated on war efforts, and resumed during the interwar years. As standards of house building improved during the 1930s, more modern, spacious, semi-detached houses were built in the area with added conveniences such as indoor bathrooms, modern plumbing, kitchens, entrance halls, and generously proportioned front and rear gardens. The main road and the adjacent streets underwent rapid population and demographic changes. Some of the more prosperous and educated among the white working classes moved to the larger semi-detached homes while the area continued to attract migrant workers from the adjacent villages who relocated to the old run-down terraced housing.

The neighbourhood continued to develop alongside housing, and many pubs, picture houses, dance halls, tea rooms, and stores sprung up along Belgrave and Melton Roads and on adjacent streets. Many of these have disappeared but some remain, repurposed into other sites. A couple of small hosiery

factories are now temples and the old picture house and cinema is now a shopping centre and wedding venue. The old pubs and working men's clubs have disappeared. A couple of pubs on their last legs are predominantly curry houses. The baker, the ironmonger, and hardware store have all gone.

The area was served by the Belgrave Rail Station that deposited hundreds of workers on to the roads, who arrived for shifts night and day. Horse drawn carriages and coal carts dominated the roads as did bicycles, buses, and trams during the inter- and pre-war years. During the war however some of the tram routes sustained damage in air bombing raids and were phased out, the last of the tram cars being stopped around 1949. The road ran straight and level all the way from the edge of the city at Rushey Fields through to the clock tower right in the centre, its surface dotted by tram wires and tracks, and buildings being continuously built up on both sides. Belgrave Rail Station was the main focal point of the road as it served as the main distribution and transit centre and moved people in and out of work on the road all day. The station also served as the transit point and location for the stables, horse drawn carts, and distribution depots for coal and fuel. The Leicester Belgrave Railway Station opened on 2nd of October 1882 as the terminus of the Leicester spur of the Great Central Railway. It provided a major lifeline for manufacturing expansion in the area especially during the inter-war and immediate post-war years as it continued to transport goods and people.

Throughout the 1950s the station suffered from gradual reduction of working services, which came to be limited to working men's services bringing people into the area for factory shifts, and excursion trains. Around the time of the

publication of Beeching Report and cuts, the rail station was closed on the 9th of September 1962 (Railways Archive Online). The area around the rail station was subsequently developed into a supermarket and car park and around 1963, the local authority housing committee decided to convert some of the land into social housing to alleviate the problem of overcrowding in the area.

During the 1960s and 1970s much of the built environment on Belgrave Road and the adjacent Melton Road comprised of terraced houses standing alongside small and medium-sized hosiery and footwear manufacturing factories, and the large British United Shoe Machinery Company Factory that employed most of the locals. There were some additions in the form of social housing and commercial developments.

During the early 1970s the local authority commenced discussions on proposals to start building a new flyover on Belgrave Road and connecting it to main traffic leading into the city centre. According to these proposals work would commence in 1973 to build a flyover which would be expanded a couple of years later into a dual carriageway, a sort of urban motorway on stilts. However these proposals would require the compulsory acquisition of houses and lands adjacent the flyover, necessitating the eviction of families and demolition of their homesteads. The vicar of the local St James' Church organised a petition campaign gathering 30 000 signatures and managed to get the plan abandoned. The flyover was eventually built but without any demolitions (Couchman 1984).

After the demographic changes in the neighbourhood during the interwar years,

the next major change occurred in the immediate post war years when the first traces of foreign migrants began to appear. This wave of migrants were arriving and settling into the area, drawn by the employment opportunities provided by the textiles and other industries as well as the growing demands of a rapidly expanding city and its urban economy (Butt 2014, Law and Haq 2007). The post-war migrants formed the Windrush generation, predominantly immigrants from the Caribbean Islands and also a significant number of South Asian immigrants from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and other migrants from Portugal and Turkey.

The area continues to draw immigrants with the more recent influx being from Eastern Europe and Northern Africa. At the beginning of the 1950s most of the migrants from the sub-continent were Punjabis and Gujaratis from the textile cities of Ludhiana, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Mumbai who flocked to the area to work in factories manufacturing garments, hosiery, textiles, and shoes. The influx of immigrants created demand for housing. During 1949-1950 the Leicester council drew up plans to demolish around 1800 houses over a 20 year period as part of a long term plan to rejuvenate the area, although the generally poor living conditions combined with the rapid deterioration of housing stock and continuous threats of redevelopment continued to depress property prices, keeping them low enough to be afforded by immigrants who rapidly found employment in the area or joined forces with their extended family and friends to purchase property together in joint ownership.

The urban aesthetics of Belgrave Road changed considerably under the influence of migration. The first wave of neighbourhood changes was driven by

migrant settlers arriving from the sub-continent to aid post-war nation rebuilding efforts. Some of these migrants were reasonably well off, university educated, suburban genteel middle class people who spoke good English and were schooled in English manners and cultural etiquette. They were drawn from the subcontinent during the 1950s and came to Britain to take up low-skilled jobs such as drivers, bus conductors, and shop floor workers. Many members of this generation still continue to live in and around the area and maintain close ties to their homeland through measures of marriage alliances, extended family networks, property investments, and land ownership. Yet they also face serious struggles in maintaining their way of life in the face of old age and rapidly changing family patterns.

A second wave of migrants arrived into the area during the late 1960s and early 1970s fleeing political upheaval and persecution in East Africa. These predominantly consisted of Asian migrants from the Gujarati Hindu Indian community, arriving from Kenya (late 1960s) and Uganda (early 1970s). Despite their ethnic Indian heritage, many of these migrants considered themselves Africans first, having been born and raised there but when circumstances changed, chose to arrive into Britain rather than immigrating to India. This wave of migrants was somewhat different to the earlier wave. Many of them did not speak English but were of a trading and business background, wealthier, cosmopolitan, and more driven and entrepreneurial in outlook (Bonney 1992, Bhogatia, Bonney, and Greaves *unknown*, Oral History Archives). These migrants quickly settled into the area, buying up property at depressed prices, and opened shops and businesses in the area or as part of their homes. Many of these enterprises such as catering shops, off licenses, news agents,

tobacconists, restaurants, grocery stores, opticians, photo studios, and fashion stores, still remain in some form or shape till today.

With the arrival of new Asian migrants, the neighbourhood felt the effects of changes in population demographics. The slow relocation of the existing population of white working class and some of the earlier Caribbean and Portuguese residents turned into a wholesale exodus as they moved out of the neighbourhood, only for the Asian migrants to settle further and expand their presence. The impact of migration was felt not only in housing but also through the rest of the systems. The May 17th 1968 edition of the Leicester Mercury reports heated debates among Tory councillors arguing that immigration was at saturation point, out of control, putting impossible strains on the local schools and health services.

During the late 1970s the road suffered from the effects of recession like the rest of the country. With increasing closure of factories and population changes, the city of Leicester like other manufacturing centres, suffered from unemployment figures well above the national average. The impact was felt in Belgrave and Melton Roads. As manufacturing began to be outsourced overseas, many factories dotting the road closed down, impacting upon the economic, socio-demographic makeup, and architectural landscape of the road and its built environment. The entire road and the adjacent areas are now dominated by small businesses including many ethnic shops. There is very little sign of the typical high street with chain stores except for the presence of a few bank branches.

The socio-cultural and demographic fabric of the road has also undergone significant changes. The impact of successive waves of migration has been significantly felt in cultural and recreational spaces of the built environment on both Belgrave and Melton Roads, many of which have been repurposed, reused, and re-heritaged through the creation of cultural memories and preserved artefacts. Through the cumulative cultural impacts of births, weddings, and deaths – the ‘hatch, match, and despatch’ of lives lived – happening within the immediate community, many spaces create new sites of heritage even as they lose others.

Since the 1970s the predominantly Hindu community of the African-Asian immigrants have become more visible on the road (Couchman 1984) but in the last decade or so, many of them have moved away from the area, retaining only their businesses. Into the old houses have moved in a steady influx of immigrants legal and illegal – Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Malawi, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Kosovan, Filipino, Turkish, Sri Lankans, Somalians, Eritreans, Albanian, Lithuanian etc. and the demographics of the road have continued to change and morph in obvious ways even during the course of this ethnographic study.

Demographic shifts have impacted on places of worship such as mosques and gurudwaras, causing them to close down or move elsewhere. In the last two or three years, a growing presence of Somali asylum seekers, as well as the relocation of a Bangladeshi Muslim community, is stimulating discussions around repurposing an old run-down restaurant site as a mosque. An old factory and an old warehouse have been repurposed as makeshift Hindu temples

which are well attended by the local communities. A very recent influx of Sri Lankan Tamils into the area is similarly fostering discussions on converting the front of a corner terraced house into a makeshift South Indian Hindu Temple.

Belgrave and Melton Roads used to be famous for their old churches, many of which have been repurposed or converted into other spaces. St. Mark's Church, the Victorian Gothic masterpiece which dominates the skyline of the road, is one such building. Built in 1874 and designed by renowned architect, Ewan Christian, St. Mark's was one of the parish churches of Belgrave Gate, until it was sold by the Church of England and deconsecrated in 1982. It is now a banqueting and events centre and wedding hall. Belgrave Hall, the impressive Methodist Church on the corner of Rothley Street and Belgrave Road, was designed by leading local architect Arthur Wakerley. After it fell into disuse as a church in the 1970s it has been converted into the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre. St Michaels', another redundant Anglican church, was converted some years ago into the Sabras Asian Radio Station, while St Albans' is still in use as an Anglican church on the corner of Weymouth Street and Harrison Road.

Belgrave Road no longer sits on the edge of the countryside as it used to. As a busy thoroughfare leading into Melton Road, following the building expansion on the latter and conversion of many residential houses into care homes, the road is more a free flowing ribbon of traffic than countryside on the north. Some of the major spatial landmarks in and around the road have undergone dramatic changes in visual aesthetics and have also resulted in major perceptual changes in the way the road and the adjacent areas are comprehended.

The construction of the flyover in the 1970s was a major event of socio-political disruption but no more so than after it was finished being constructed. The flyover helped connect the road with overflow traffic in and out of the city centre but only succeeded in creating more traffic congestions on Belgrave Road. Despite connecting traffic, the flyover and the Outer Ring Road caused a visual, physical, and aesthetic sense of separation from the rest of the city. The flyovers cut off the road, creating an isolated hinterland comprising of St Mark's Church, the Star Cinema, now pulled down, and Leicester College. Abbey Park and its beautiful gardens and parks, which nourished and nurtured long-time residents, now feels separated, abandoned, and forcibly cleaved from the rest of the area because of the realignment of Abbey Park Road. The Belgrave Cemetery now has been isolated from the community it was originally intended to serve and stands in danger of becoming neglected.

In the last few years of the study, the flyover has been demolished, somewhat suddenly. When I revisited the site after a brief gap the gaping chasm where the flyover used to stand, came as something of a shock for me. After the demolition was complete and the road opened up I hoped that Belgrave would feel more connected to the city. Now although traffic passes through freely, it feels impersonal, sterile, and anonymous, and the rest of the overpass that moves away from the city feels as if it has visually turned away from Belgrave.

Belgrave Rail Station, the original heartbeat and lifeline of the road, fell victim to the desecration wrought by the Beeching Report, and had his innards ripped out when it closed down. For a long time the land lay fallow, bits of it being hacked off for social development, until Sainsbury's built a superstore branch there a

few years ago. In a move as sudden as that of the flyover, the supermarket has also now gone. The land lies bare, but part of its external parking lot area now hosts a brand new B&M discount store, part of the B&M chain run by the ex-Chairman of Sainsbury's arch rival Tesco, Sir Terry Leahy.

Two of the biggest factories in the area have been repurposed. The Imperial Typewriter factory is now a commercial centre while the British United Shoe Machinery factory is a housing development. One has fallen victim to a fire, the words 'arson' and 'insurance scam' spoken loudly even as firefighters tackle the blaze (BBC 2015). Belgrave Hall which used to stand sentinel over the area in all its grandeur and glory over the past centuries, now stands isolated, its feudal past closed and shrouded in mystery and haunted by paranormal occurrences (Butt 2009). The Hall and the House are maintained as museums by the local council and are opened on special days while the Gardens are open to the public. The Hall remained in the hands of successive generations of owner-families who played an important socio-economic and civic role in the history of Belgrave. Their memories remain immortalised within the grand halls and gardens here and the haunting spaces of the surrounding parish churches.

In the last few years of visiting Belgrave and the adjacent areas for purposes of this study, I have seen, felt, and experienced a spectrum of changes characterising the place, the site, and the neighbourhood. At times it has felt vibrant, busy, and enterprising while most other times it feels lethargic, drained, and struggling to find purpose and motivation. Sometimes the spatial features of the neighbourhood appear to come together as a cohesive whole while at other times it feels barely palpable, anonymous, and somewhat sterile.

The supposedly collective spirit of a community that comes together during celebrations that local authorities effusively discuss has noticeably waned and the neighbourhood feels increasingly atomised, fragmented, and decidedly unsafe. Urban decline is very apparent in most places and many of the commercial and civic spaces through the roads and side streets struggle with purposive existence, making for a stark contrast with some of the busy shops, retail spaces, and bustling crowds. It is a site rich in history, vignettes of which remains hidden, dead, buried, dormant, and reticent within its nooks and crannies, its thriving shops, bustling streets, its faded spaces, boarded up windows, and grimy, graffiti-ridden interiors. Within these spaces, life and death, hope and despair, promise and failure, striking beauty and faded grandeur exist side by side, and in each other.

II

STORIES FROM THE STREET

This chapter section presents vignettes of everyday life carried out in Belgrave captured through mundane practices and life flows (Appendix 6). Using practices as a heuristic tool, these sketches capture an understanding of place as a dispersed set of practices beyond immediate limitations of space or time. The place is presented as a non-representational assemblage of people, knowledge, values, attitudes, belief systems, affect, sensation, and agentic potential that manifests through everyday practices which gather together assorted material artefacts, buildings, spaces, memory, life stories, history, and social markers while also presenting the emplaced researcher's role in placemaking. Methodological hybrids underpinning street ethnography are used to sketch an outline of this geographical self through practices in co-producing place and inscribing its affective engagement.

Practices encompass a range of day to day activities as well as occasions, life goals, and landmark moments that make up people's lives and life flows. They document ordinary moments, every day experiences, and numerous life encounters through which humans shape themselves and each other in place and perform how places shape them in turn. These practices are undertaken in and through Belgrave's multiple public and private spaces, playing out as events and phases in passages of time, ebbing and flowing through actions, affect, and cognitive capabilities, capturing the geographies of what happens and texturing the place in and through which they are enacted every day.

EARNING LIVELIHOODS

Belgrave's story is intricately intertwined with the lives of people who have earned their livelihoods in and through it. Their stories are rich, vivid slices of the nation's socio-economic history, illustrating practices of earning, saving, and spending money, and how it has shaped the lives of peoples and place.

Captured as a snapshot, Belgrave Road is a busy urban thoroughfare, flowing traffic in either direction, tightly packed with shops, flanked by side streets with rows of red-bricked terrace homes. It appears a thriving ethnic minority neighbourhood of the kind found across many urban areas in Britain. Rows of small shops and businesses suggest a predominantly trading community that live and work here. Like many others, Belgrave has evolved and changed considerably through the passage of time as a living and working landscape.

Historical records indicate Belgrave's agrarian origins, remnants of which landscape can still be glimpsed through the River Soar as it skirts fertile meadows near Belgrave Gate, bearing traces of a rich agricultural past. Like most rural economies, people lived off the land, ate what they grew, and traded for the rest. Time was dictated by the leisurely passage of seasons, influenced by weather, productivity and earnings measured by how much people could grow to sustain them till the next harvest.

Gradual changes to Belgrave's landscape came with cottage working, followed by factory working, and more dramatically, the Industrial Revolution which built Leicester's wealth and reputation. Co-existent earlier, agriculture rapidly came

to be outgrown by factories and manufacturing through the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Urbanisation proceeded apace as the city expanded to accommodate dozens of textile, shoe, hosiery, and machinery factories.

Belgrave's agrarian landscape changed dramatically with the development of roads, side streets, and terraced housing. The surrounding villages saw a population exodus as farm workers poured into the city, seeking work in the factories located on Belgrave and Melton Roads, to be swallowed up by its dark, dreary confines. Agrarian work practices that had provided a measure of independence and self-containment were now replaced by lives dictated by the clock punch machine. Time was modularised, measured, people's productivity dictated by the economic value of their livelihoods. Factories and industrial working were the preferred means of earning livelihoods during the turn of and through the early decades of the twentieth century.

Kenneth started working in a factory on Belgrave Road during the 1930s while still in his teens as an unskilled shop floor labourer. Wage work provided him a way out of the grim realities of growing up with parents and eight siblings in a dank, one-bed house in Belgrave village. The Great Depression was on its last legs, domestic industry was growing, factories were opening or recovering, and demand for work was picking up once more. Ken trained up from the shop floor to become an engineer, retrained as an accountant through night classes, and worked for an American multinational until retirement. All through his working life and beyond, he retained a passion for books and knowledge, undimmed even into his 90s when he eventually succumbed to throat cancer. He had no family of his own but his funeral was attended by scores of former colleagues, many from Belgrave, who came together to celebrate his memories. He shared

many of those memories with me, often tinged with visceral descriptions of smells –carbolic soap, musty dampness of childhood home, grime, grease, and diesel on the shop floor, coal and pungent horse dung from fuel carts, acrid tang of vinegar from fish and chips, his payday treat to himself. Machines, lathes, drills, and assorted shop floor tools were a limitless source of wonder to a boy endowed with a vivid imagination and curiosity. Factory working was a lifelong adventure in learning and broadening one's mind, and the factory itself was a space of both endless puzzles and means of solving them.

Kenneth enjoyed the factory wages only inasmuch as they were a welcome change from childhood poverty, allowing him to put away money towards his nieces' and nephews' education. For Kenneth himself, employment was only a means that facilitated a lifelong quest for learning and self-improvement. Being a frugal man and conditioned by childhood poverty and deprivation, Ken never spent much more than on his basic needs. He was however a frequent visitor of local libraries, museums, industrial heritage sites, and any other historical landmarks connected to Britain's industrial history, one of his many passions. To work is to live, to live is to learn, and learning never stops, he often told me.

The immediate aftermath of the Second World War and reconstruction of post-war Britain brought about tremendous changes to working practices, but no more so than on Belgrave. Urban expansion was well underway now and the geography of the place changed rapidly from factories to roads, streets, terraced homes, social housing, and infrastructure development. Living conditions were basic; sanitation was poor, as were indoor plumbing, running water, and infrastructure standards. The demographic makeup of the area was

also fast changing. White working classes were joined by waves of migrants from Portugal, the Caribbean, South Asia, among others, all coming to seek work in the factories and elsewhere within the fast expanding urban metropolis of Leicester, each with their own set of aspirations and motives for working and earning a living.

For the white working classes entering factory labour, wartime deprivation was only a faint childhood memory if at all. Living standards were still poor but considerably better than their parents' and grandparents' generations. Factory working meant a ready wage, steady income, improved socio-economic status, greater opportunities for leisure and entertainment, aspirations for a better lifestyle, and hope for the future. Most did not have aspirations for white collar work. They were too young to serve in the war. Some served in the army for a short time but most left school early with bare minimum qualifications. Some of their friends headed further into the Midlands for apprenticeship training in the car factories while many others stayed behind to work in the local factories where work was plentiful even for unskilled and semi-skilled labour.

For Jane and Joe, their slightly younger friends Anne and Brian, Violet and Mick, and hundreds of white working classes, factories were the entry point into the world of work, a step away from their past, and into a better future. Many of these people grew up in and around Belgrave but not many had remained there, having moved away during the war, and especially afterwards as the Caribbean and South Asian migrants moved in. Factory workers travelled into work on bicycles and public transport, buses running down the length of the roads, and the rail depositing them at the entrance of Belgrave Road. Men

stayed on in factories. The 'girls' quickly moved into administration and secretarial roles, taking on typewriting and shorthand classes. Some moved into white collar work in hospitals, schools, local government, and the rapidly exchanging trunk and telephone exchanges of the then General Post Office, later to be British Telecommunications. Textile, shoe, and hosiery factories nurtured male camaraderie and bonding as well as romance between the sexes. Couples 'courted' each other between shifts, in the canteens, around cashier's tills, in the many pubs, dance halls, and picture house down the road. 'Going to the pictures' at the local Colosseum, was a special treat, sitting behind screened booths, sipping drinks purchased from roving usherettes.

Factories however were the mainstay of work and livelihoods especially for the men. Earnings were good and it afforded the workforce a lifestyle that their parents' generation did not enjoy. Wages were paid weekly in cash, mostly on Thursdays. Payday was a jolly affair, the men gathered around cashiers till, joking, chatting, settling up old debts, and getting into new ones. The sensible ones took money home and gave the womenfolk their share for housekeeping. The not-so-sensible headed straight to the pub and often missed work on Fridays. Either way, Friday afternoons at the pub was almost mandatory, a near-religious ritual. Pubs and working men's clubs on the road saw men head there at the end of the working week and spend their wages on beer, snacks, pool, and darts. Buying rounds was a sacrosanct social code; any transgressions meticulously recorded, mercilessly mocked, and openly shamed. Many headed to the tracks and card tables on the weekend.

Women had their wage routines too. Unlike the men, they were careful to bank

their money, and pinch pennies from the housekeeping budget for secret luxuries like makeup or a pair of stockings. Saturdays were household days, markets, shopping, settling accounts at the butcher and grocer, meeting up with the girls at the tearooms. Hairdressing salons were confessional spaces, secrets shared, confidences exchanged, fashion and make up tips swapped, and signed photos of movie stars received upon fan requests shown off. Dress patterns were painstakingly copied out from magazines and reproduced on trusty Singer machines while a variety of experimentation from hair curlers to fake eyelashes were carried out diligently.

In booming post-war Britain, living standards were on the rise, work was steady and plentiful even for the unskilled. Aspirational symbols hitherto considered unattainable were now within reach, and blue and white collar work in factories, shops, and offices were now preferred means of earning livelihoods. Money earned through wages was managed by both thrift and profligacy. Lifelong habits of saving, frugality, and recycling sat side by side with a growing appetite for spending on leisure, entertainment, and lifestyle choices, sometimes to unacceptable levels. Problems with alcohol, gambling, and violence were not unknown. People did not deny themselves but did so mostly within reason. Those who exceeded limits found themselves in trouble at home or with the police and sometimes ended up in the local pawnshops on Melton Road, pledging their belongings, even a suit or a pair of shoes, only to redeem them back on pay day. Earning a livelihood and a wage was about spending it and living well, even if it sometimes was beyond means.

For migrant communities working and earning livelihoods engendered slightly

different relationships with money. A bustling Portuguese community lived off Melton Road during the early 1950s. Eschewing factory work, many went into Leicester's thriving catering trade, eventually opening up businesses and small enterprises. Only one small Portuguese restaurant, more closed than open, remains of that community now. Rudi is now a manager of a major cinema chain in Oxfordshire but still retains childhood memories of that restaurant owned and managed by his grandfather and grand uncles, sounds of laughter, music, discussions, heated debates, and tables groaning under lots of food and wine. His grandparents, grand aunts, uncles and many other relatives quickly moved away into Leicester, Birmingham, and mostly to London, lured by the huge opportunities in property and catering.

For other migrant communities arriving into Belgrave during the 1950s, working and earning livelihoods was less about living, lifestyles, and socio-economic aspirations and more about insecurity, frugality, and self-denial. Money was both a yoke and liberation. The Windrush generation and Caribbean migrants arrived in Belgrave as elsewhere in Britain just after the war. Many sought work in the factories but many more went into services and pursued employment in local schools, hospitals, hotels, and the catering trade. Some set up shops but many were not entrepreneurial, preferring wage work instead. Money was tight but wages were still considerably higher than what they could have earned back home. Only some of the community brought families over. Many preferred to send money home, scrimping and saving what they could out of their meagre wages to remit money overseas. Many had to pay back relatives who contributed money for their passage to England. When that debt was paid off however there were more demands, more expectations, a sick relative, a

church needing funds, a farm holding come up for sale, a relative starting up a business, all expecting assistance from the 'rich relative in England'. Post offices and local bank branches became a lifeline, offering cheap and effective money transfer services.

One of the few, if not the only remaining member of the Caribbean community residents on Belgrave Road was Sherlyn, introduced to me by her granddaughter Jasmin who worked as a housekeeper in a local hotel. Sherlyn worked in the local hospital, starting as a cleaner, then healthcare assistant, and nurse. With Jasmin's help I reconstructed and interpreted many of Sherlyn's fast fading memories about early life in Belgrave during the 1950s. The Caribbean community never stopped longing for the sunshine and warmth of their native lands. Settling into a new home was never easy. Life was hard in England, cold, always rainy. Adapting to local dress codes, etiquette, speech, and mannerisms was not difficult. Most spoke fluent and grammatically correct English, with florid, elaborate vocabulary, and stylistic flourishes. Socialising though was not easy. Although there was no overt segregation, racial divisions were keenly felt nonetheless.

Despite social and monetary restrictions, the Caribbean community never lost their zest for life and entertainment. Local churches, one or two of them now Baptist, became their new social centres. Many gave generously to church funds which in turn were used to put on events that gathered and constructed a community and support network from amongst the remaining settlers. Eating out and going dancing were the highlights of their social life and much of their remaining wages were spent on leisure and entertainment.

These working practices had some overlaps with the lives of the South Asian migrants from the sub-continent who also settled into Belgrave around the same time. Many of these migrants were solely men, at least initially, predominantly university graduates, and used to a much higher standard of middle class life complete with own homes, gardens, servants, and occasionally even cars and drivers. The salaries they could earn in white collar government jobs in the subcontinent however did not even come close to the potential wages earned in British factories. Many of these men came over here to work in the textile and shoe factories, as bus drivers, train attendants, and other blue collar work. Wages were good. The money they sent back home each month enhanced their standing and reputation among relatives. The shame and self-loathing around doing menial labour despite having a good university education was private and silent though.

These migrants were driven by thrift, frugality, hard work, and also deep insecurity. Their self-esteem and social standing was deeply tied to the wages they earned. Their lives were dictated by extreme hard work and self-denial to the point of punishment and abnegation, driving them even harder. Many took on second and even third jobs, giving tuitions, working as hospital and hotel cleaners, sweet shop workers, catering suppliers and drivers to add to their savings. Learning to cook and clean for themselves was the hardest part as they had to do without servants and womenfolk who normally did household chores. It was a while before they had saved up enough to bring over their families. Till then their families were their fellow migrants, bonded together by shared, mutually supportive circumstances. They shared lodgings, cooked and

did laundry together, scoured local areas for shops that sold Asian spices and groceries and crafted a makeshift Indian culture within their threadbare lodgings. They split shifts with one another, shared inside tips on where extra work could be found, loaned each other money in times of difficulty without charging interest, and kept a watchful, benign eye on each other's spending habits.

A few years later these men were joined by fresh arrivals from the Indian state of Goa, now newly liberated from Portugal. Tony Pinto, a commerce graduate from Baroda University, is as garrulous and cheeky now in his late 70s as he was I imagine in his youth. Caught in an awkward in-between position in India between his native Goan-Portuguese heritage and identity and Indian nationality, Pinto set out on an adventure in following his fellow Goans into Belgrave during the 1960s. His friends did not stay in Belgrave for long though. Although not as well educated as Pinto, many came from a maritime background and quickly moved to find lucrative work in the London Docklands. Pinto remained in Belgrave, working in the factories, becoming a bus driver, and giving maths tuitions during his spare time. He set up a savings club, helped fellow residents remit money through the Post Office and the local Westminster Bank branch, even helping the latter design savings and remittance leaflets in Konkani language to help his fellow Goans.

His cultural habits though found him being placed in a similarly awkward position amongst his fellow migrants from South Asia. Pinto liked his beers, wines, and meat which did not find favour with his puritanical, teetotal, vegetarian Gujarati friends here. He loved dancing and music and formed a

deeper kinship with the Portuguese community than he did amongst fellow South Asians as he joined them for weekly dancing, drinks, and feasts.

As factories continued to flourish on Belgrave through the 1950s and 1960s and migrant families settled, the men stayed on in wage work and the women found more entrepreneurial means of supplementing family incomes. From making and selling chutneys, poppadums, pickles, peeling garlic, chopping onions for nearby catering businesses, taking on sewing and embroidery work, even growing and selling vegetables and herbs, women found small creative outlets for enterprise.

The next wave of migrants into Belgrave during the 1960s and 1970s had markedly contrasting work practices despite similarities in demographic makeup. Migrants of Indian origin fleeing Kenya and Uganda to settle in Belgrave and elsewhere in Britain were a predominantly trading community. Despite the circumstances of their departure they possessed sufficient socio-economic resources to buy up property in and around Belgrave and start new businesses. Living conditions were still poor in Belgrave, most terraced homes were of barely habitable standards with little or no indoor sanitation or running water, but these were still enough though for migrants to settle in, start businesses, and live in lodgings upstairs with families.

Many businesses established by the African Indian migrants are still going concerns today. Ethnic fashions, jewellery shops, and vegetarian restaurants are successful and thriving. The newsagents, tobacconists, and hardware stores are struggling, while the photo studios, opticians, and pharmacists trade amongst a rapidly diminishing yet loyal customer base. All businesses are still

family owned and managed. Owners take a hands-on approach to running the shops day to day while second generation children now in their 50s and 60s carry on the family tradition, sons taking over jewellery, finance, and related businesses and daughters favouring fashions and food related trades typically. This community is prosperous, building and improving upon its fortunes from when they settled here. Although many owners have moved away residentially to more upmarket suburbs, they still retain property and other commercial interests in Belgrave.

Work practices among third generations though are more mixed influenced by many factors. BN is the daughter-in-law of a prominent local business family with interests in restaurants, fashion, and property. Her in-laws and parents were amongst the earliest East African Indian migrants in the 1970s. Hers was an arranged marriage. Her family is media friendly, well-connected to local political interests, and patronises local charities and temples. BN takes care of the family's restaurant and catering business and oversees a couple of the ethnic fashion shops on Belgrave Road. She rules the restaurant with an iron hand, sits at the till every day, and orders staff and suppliers around. She also pops into the fashion shops twice a day to check on the takings, '*can't trust anyone*' she says. She is busying herself planning her son's wedding. Her son is an investment banker in New York, marrying another banker. Her daughter is a surgeon in Los Angeles. She is proud of her children, of them fulfilling her ambitions for them. She never allowed them to work while young. Getting a part time job was never a consideration as it would be distracting to studies and detrimental to the family's social status.

Gaz is a 19 year old studying computing at a local college. He used to work in

BN's restaurant but had to quit because she wouldn't give him time off for exams even though he offered to compensate with extra shifts. He also has had trouble with his wages. BN insists on paying him cash, often underpaying him, while he needs wage slips in order to build a credit history with his bank.

JP is another wealthy businessman in Belgrave. Having arrived from Kenya he started up a food business, and now owns a huge catering service and restaurant. His business has been featured in a couple of TV food shows. He talks seriously about the role of the community as custodians of Indian culture and projects himself as a community and cultural patron. He thinks women have a special role to play but not necessarily in the workplace. He does not allow either of his daughters to work. The rough and tumble world of work is not for them and they don't need the money anyway as they want for nothing, he says. Instead he wants them to marry well. Since he knows me only as a student researcher and not as a working professional, he offers to 'protect' me if I ever need help. Then he closes his office door behind him and makes a pass at me.

NP is an 18year third generation British Indian girl who works in JP's restaurant. Her parents are middling level public sector workers. She would love to work in retail like her white classmates, be independent, and earn her own pocket money. Her parents won't let her work in retail but have relented for her current job because JP is a prominent figure in the business community. They think she works in back office admin, doing accounting and general paperwork but have no idea she is washing dishes and waiting tables. NP tells me her parents will

be horrified if they find out that she is often shouted at, reduced to tears, and often underpaid, in cash. I ask her if she found him as creepy as I did. Her eyes well up and she turns away.

CH, who runs a chain of restaurants in Leicester, wants his British born son to start up a business in India. His son, with all the privileges of wealth, has been in trouble with the law a few times and CH thinks a stint in India will be a conditioning experience. CH's daughter has ambitions of moving to London to join a professional dance school and seek her fortunes in Bollywood. She feels London's cultural scene is '*cooler*' than in Leicester and has been compiling a modelling portfolio without her parents' knowledge. K runs the photo studio he started in 1972 alongside his son but wants his granddaughter to be married off instead of entering the family business.

AJ a third generation Indian has dropped out of medical school in order to pursue a career in pharmacology. He now works for a cancer research institute but feels he is a disappointment to his parents. He thinks Belgrave is a '*dump*' and desperately wants to move to Birmingham but lives at home and his parents won't let him. His younger sister P though has returned after completing her degree in Bristol. She moved away because she hated Belgrave and Leicester and found it suffocating. After three years in Bristol however she has realised that she doesn't hate Belgrave as much as she thought she did, actually misses it. She now works as a children's nursery assistant to bide time till she marries and settles.

M is a third generation British Indian working for Barclays. He has recently

returned from Mumbai after an eight-month assignment setting up a call centre. He makes it obvious that he has used his accent and nationality status to establish his superiority over '*desis*' and is openly contemptuous of what he sees as their lack of sophistication. Shaz is a British Pakistani Muslim, conservatively dressed, but is articulate, focused, and entrepreneurial with a sharp business brain. She runs a successful ethnic fashion store on the road after having identified a clear niche market. Realising that her BT job was a dead-end one a few years ago, she took the entrepreneurial plunge and now employs her husband to help her manage the store and look after her children while she takes care of the bulk of business responsibilities.

The wealthy privilege their children, often pushing them into high-skilled high-paying professions like banking, medicine, and dentistry, although some youngsters branch off into businesses, seeking more mainstream entrepreneurial ventures. The more modestly salaried folk also push their children into middle class white collar professions but encourage them to seek opportunities in London and often in US, Australia, and even in India where they feel their British nationality and background will give them an advantage. The younger generations' choice of work practices are often caught in the crossroads of multiple career options, family wealth, background, parental expectations, cultural stereotypes, and gender norms.

A grey economy is fuelled by cash, and sustained by people desperate to remain in the shadows of work. L is a widow in her 60s, barely speaks English, and is suspicious of outsiders asking questions. She works in an ethnic fashion shop and spends all day folding and unfolding clothes and cleaning the shop.

She is paid in cash from weekly till takings while the owners have relocated to London. N does menial jobs with a local caterer and events organiser to make ends meet. He has overstayed his visitor visa, is afraid of seeking better work elsewhere in case his illegal immigration status is exposed, but remains trapped by circumstances.

Belgrave and Melton Roads are also fast changing. As the earlier settlers move away to more upmarket suburbs and other cities, they find it difficult to keep businesses going with the help of family members. Many hire low-wage workers to man the shops but people who will work for cash and keep their mouths shut are hard to come by. Some hire newly arrived migrants but have to pay minimum wage or more. Many don't trust migrants of different ethnicities and many prefer not to hire Eastern Europeans who are very aware and demanding of their legal, employment rights. Some relax their long-standing control over property, premises which are as run down now as they were in the 1960s, and sell or lease premises to other businesses. Melton Road has more diverse trading patterns compared to Belgrave Road. The latter is dominated by fashion and jewellery shops, and vegetarian restaurants, while Melton Road is dotted by everything from Chinese medicine shops, Polish grocery stores, and halal butchers to florists, sweet shops, funeral homes, and pawn shops. A Bangladeshi community is now moving into this area, starting up butchers, kebab shops, and curry houses.

As the demographic makeup of Belgrave changes, work practices change too. In the last few years there has been a steady influx of people from Sri Lanka, Philippines, Albania, Somalia, Eritrea alongside Eastern Europeans into

Belgrave. Lucyna and Stefan are a young Polish couple, ambitious, hardworking, and focused. They worked full time, one in a local restaurant, another in a pub in Belgrave while studying at a local college. Having completed their studies, both have found higher paying white collar work with better employment conditions and have moved to a better part of the city. The migrants from South and South East Asia are newly recruited to work in hospitals and care homes. They visit Belgrave for shopping and sampling the restaurants but have full time jobs elsewhere and only occasionally pick up cash work. The Sri Lankans are relocating from London. Having arrived in the UK during the 1980s as refugees, many went into low-paying jobs while starting up small businesses like newsagents and buying up property in areas like Tooting, Croydon, and Stratford. Their properties are worth a small fortune now but their wages do not support the living and commuting costs of London so they rent out their premises and move to Leicester in search of jobs, business opportunities, and cheaper living.

Some earn livelihoods through questionable methods. A Bangladeshi lad tells me he dropped out of college but now makes a lucrative living crashing cars for defrauding insurance premiums! A Pakistani lad from Peshawar, who has been in the UK for several years on a long-expired student visa, has now applied for asylum, claiming to have worked as an Afghan interpreter for the UK army in Kabul. He picks up translation and interpretation work from the local council but no one has the ability to verify his specific language skills or his geographical antecedents. He claims his life is in danger if he returns home despite having a large family in Peshawar, many in white collar jobs, and is now claiming benefits while his asylum claim is processed.

The Somalians and Eritreans appear to have no visible means of income support nor do they go out to work. Nearly all of them are asylum seekers claiming refuge in the UK. They are joined by people from Senegal and elsewhere in Africa who have all made their way into the UK via Portugal. Having found their way into Europe, many have managed to claim Portuguese resident status, be recruited by gangmasters who bring them over to work as seasonal agricultural labourers in rural Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and elsewhere. They work in the UK long enough to qualify for working credits and move to Peterborough and beyond in search of further work or claim asylum after 'losing' their papers.

There are whispers of drug gangs moving into the area but no one is willing to share more details. A local pharmacist tells me that he has had to install security alarms in his shop after it was broken into a few times and says he is harassed by African itinerants in the area who turn up demanding off the book prescription drugs for illnesses including HIV. He is seriously considering closing down his shop and moving away despite having lived in Belgrave for over 40 years.

Hopes, dreams, and ambitions are realised, thwarted, suppressed, and manipulated through Belgrave's many shops, streets, businesses, homes, and communal spaces through change, continuity, harmony, and conflict. Through support, grit, graft, crime, oppression, hypocrisy, and exploitation, people earn and sustain livelihoods through multiple work practices.

MANAGING MONEY

Through the passage of time, Belgrave has witnessed people undertaking assorted working practices to pursue modest dreams and aspirations. The quality of people's lives and how they have sustained their livelihoods however has largely been shaped by various means by which they have earned and managed their money in and around Belgrave.

Like many other places in Britain, Belgrave has been an agricultural settlement with a long history traceable to an agrarian, tribal, genetic past. The Industrial Revolution and Leicester's long association with factory working and manufacturing has established its reputation as a magnet for the working classes, and Belgrave is no different. Belgrave and Melton Roads have been lined up with factories and establishments where people have worked, earned their livelihoods, and made their living. Wealth, prosperity, or otherwise that ensues from these livelihoods have resulted from ways in which people have managed their money and their multiple practices of saving, spending.

In popular media discourse, Belgrave Road, rightly or wrongly has been identified as being an ethnic minority neighbourhood, an '*Indian area*', and is strongly associated with the Indian community who arrived from Africa during the late 1960s and early 1970s and settled here. Many settlers purchased properties on Belgrave and Melton Roads and on the side streets, and started up businesses and shops, many of which remain today. The community is predominantly of a trading background, well known for its business acumen,

canny entrepreneurial instincts, and thrift which has helped it consolidate its wealth and influence. This community also believes in living well, saving, spending, and investing its money. One of the most popular ways is by purchasing jewellery.

Of the shops that were established in Belgrave Road during the 1970s the thriving jewellery shops still stand out. One of the many urban myths that has inspired Belgrave Road's branding as The Golden Mile is the glowing reflection of these jewellery shops. It is easy to see why. From the outside, one can glimpse the glitter of precious metal on display in the shop windows. Inside, the sight is even more dazzling. Every inch of shop space behind the counters is dedicated to rows and rows of gold and diamond jewellery in satin-bedded boxes, lining up glass fronted display cases up to the ceiling. Extra bright ceiling lights magnify the glitter, the gleam from gold and diamonds offset by the dull heavy sheen of silverware. The shops feed an insatiable appetite for gold, an Indian cultural tradition that goes back thousands of years.

The Indian community ploughs most of its savings into gold, the purchase of which is a combination of sentiment, superstition, cultural tradition, social status, but most of all good business sense. Aside from property, gold is viewed as a safe, infallible, fool-proof investment. It is commonly used as leverage in lending and borrowing practices, as assurance and guarantees in business transactions between families, and in Hindu accounting practices. It's most visible and articulate statement though is in establishing social status in family occasions especially weddings. Indian weddings are the last word in conspicuous consumption and are usually awash in gold, diamond, silverware, and

expensive silks. Myths and superstitions are attached to rituals of purchasing precious metals. Silver holds a special place and is invested in the form of heirlooms, prayer artefacts, special kitchen utensils, anklets and other foot jewellery commonly worn by Indian women. It is considered inauspicious to wear gold on one's feet. Diamonds are showpiece heirloom items, earrings, necklaces, and bangles. However the pride of place for consumption is in gold, in its myriad forms of jewellery and adornments. Gold is the most prominent item in dowry negotiations and the social status of a bride is often determined by the quantity of gold she is married off. Even in these enlightened times, any family considers it a matter of utmost prestige to marry off their bride with the greatest quantity of gold they can afford, a trousseau that is accumulated almost since the day she is born.

The Gujarati community particularly also have a long tradition of gold and diamond craftsmanship. Their lineage can be traced to Surat, the diamond capital of India and they have centuries' of connections with Antwerp's diamond trade. Belgrave Road's jewellery merchants are part of a strong and wide diaspora trading network that cuts across territorial borders and strengthens their supply chain. In recent times, their business has been affected by soaring prices of gold in the commodity markets as families cut back on traditional purchases but these are simply put off, not given up altogether. Gold purchases go hand in hand with wedding arrangements and the shops are busy throughout the year but especially so during wedding seasons.

The actual purchase of gold and the transaction involved, is a fascinating ritual, almost like watching a mating dance between two cunning adversaries, each

cautious and respectful of one another's strengths and weaknesses. From the buyer's side the purchase scenario is almost always dominated by the matriarch of the family, the men and the younger generations reduced to mere spectators. From the seller's side the shop owners are wary, respectful, and very courteous but also sharp enough to seize upon the slightest signs of wobble on matters of price. The matriarchs are long seasoned and cast an eagle eye over the jewellery produced in front of them, scanning them with laser like precision for the slightest of impurities or flaws in cut, design, weight, or size, and drawing upon a wealth of instinct, tacit and inherited knowledge to assess the suitability of wares. Shopkeepers patiently pull out and display the velvet lined cases for inspection, tirelessly opening and closing boxes, suggesting designs, cuts, fashion styles, negotiating, bargaining, compromising, until suitable agreements are reached by both parties.

These gold jewellery will never be used except on weddings and very special occasions; yet their mere presence and the knowledge of their existence provides a huge sense of reassurance and security to families. The purchase planning process causes tensions in families. Youngsters prefer the money to be put to use as deposits for houses or venture capital for business start-ups but the older generations still prefer to opt for traditional investments. Gold is transcendental, immune to vagaries of property markets, resistant against interest rate changes, and socially non-negotiable.

The Indian community settled here from Africa have also made careful investments in property. Many settlers in the 1970s purchased terraced homes from where they started up businesses, often living above the premises. Only

some of these migrants still remain as residents in the area although they still manage their businesses. By owning their commercial premises, they have been able to avoid prohibitive business rates in the city centre and have kept overheads lower although they do complain about lack of business support from civic authorities. The upside is that parts of Belgrave Road are thriving with shops. There are few boarded up windows in sight. The contrast with the rest of the road could not be starker where several boarded up shops, failing businesses, run down properties, and graffiti mar the sights. Residential premises are often used to house the wage workers in the shops for cash board and rent. They are in terribly rundown condition but are still in demand. More recently, newly arriving migrants rent these homes but owners say they are unreliable tenants as they don't work, depend on benefits or questionable sources of income, and are often violent and abusive.

Many business owners have moved away from Belgrave and do not live here anymore. They are to be found in upmarket suburbs of Leicestershire, Birmingham, and London but still maintain an iron grip on access to commercial property in Belgrave. Property and business ownership is maintained through a tightly controlled family network, title deeds often held in various family members' names through complex tax and accounting structures. Many follow traditional accounting practices, holding properties as Hindu Family Units where the head of family is also head of business and in the instance of whose death, the power of attorney passes to the wife. Family units and networks are strong and only occasionally do family feuds result in division of property ownership. One way to get around family disputes is through arranged marriages, still common practice within this community. It ensues property ownership is

secured and perpetuated through family networks, the public face of a complex network of financial holdings. As well as being a pragmatic financial arrangement, the family unit is also a cultural commitment and socio-economic statement. Weddings and celebratory events are occasions when the strength and influence of this family unit is on full show alongside jewellery, silks, designer watches, flashy cars, and corpulent well-fed bodies. *Navratri* celebrations and *dandiya* nights – occasions when the traditional dance is performed by families – are particular examples when the wealth of this community is on particular display. Families arrive in expensive cars, Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz, Bentleys, and the occasional Rolls-Royce. Wave after wave of people descend on celebrations at the Peepul Community Centre, networking, dancing, feasting, and most of all seeing and being seen. The community is an immigrant success story by any standards.

In day to day life however they are as thrifty and frugal as any other migrant community who have made their home in Belgrave. Businesses are often cash takings. Tight control is kept over wastage, costs, and wages. Many workers are paid in cash, often it seems under the table. Many work off the books which makes it easier. Supply chains are tightly controlled through diaspora networks where goods are purchased for a fraction of the price they are sold at. This community has also built up strong links with other wholesalers and supply networks in Birmingham, London, and elsewhere for importing spices and groceries and supplying them to retail catering trade. Shaz is an example of how overseas networks are tapped into supplying raw materials at low cost. Shaz has been born and raised in Britain. Her husband hails from Pakistan and is now settled here on the strength of his marriage to a British citizen. Through

his family connections, Shaz purchases fabrics in Lahore's wholesale markets. Her major problem is rigorous quality control and design specifications. Through persistence and canny negotiations she has built up a network of cloth suppliers who provide her with the fabrics and raw materials. Through her in-laws in Pakistan she has managed to build up a small network of women who do the tailoring for her from home. It earns them pennies as added income and she manages to bring the finished goods over to Britain to sell them at over 10 times what it costs her to make. She also manages a lucrative market stall selling pillows, bedding, curtain fabrics, and nets at astonishing markups.

Shaz freely admits that she wouldn't be as successful in Birmingham where competition is tougher. In Belgrave though she has found and maintained her niche, selling everyday ethnic fashions that are not too gaudy or flashy but something that is practical, affordable, fashionable, and appealing to ethnic and non-ethnic women alike. Beyond her shop and market stall, she maintains no connection to Belgrave. At the end of the business day she shuts up shop and goes home to Birmingham. She is similar to many of the African-Indians who have settled here, made their wealth, but choose not to stay behind on the road. They still appear in Belgrave in order to run their businesses, participate in Diwali and other celebrations, and family reunions, showcase their influence and success but to them money, the prudent and thrifty management of it, is a means of 'arriving' and having arrived in a new society they now call home.

Money, the saving and investing of it, has carried a different sort of mindset and approach from earlier generations who have lived and worked here. The native working classes who started in the factories of post-war Britain appear to have

treated money somewhat differently. These were children of the war generation who started working in the factories during the 1950s. War deprivation was a distant childhood memory and there was a new hope about future prospects. Britain was beginning to find its feet again and wages earned from factory working afforded these people a lifestyle that had never been within their parents' reach. They were different from the generations of their parents and grandparents whose lives were often blighted by endemic poverty and deprivation. This generation was caught between the two great wars and families tried to live through the Great Depression. The means to work, to have any kind of work, was a welcome relief from and a way out of poverty. Money more often than not meant ensuring that one did not worry about where the next meal was going to come from and there was a matter-of-fact, unsentimental, immediacy about their attitude to money.

Kenneth was typical of this earlier generation. He had a practical approach to money, thrifty, frugal, and careful with his wages. He needed little and spent even less. He had spartan, austere, almost ascetic tastes in most things although he never descended into self-flagellation. He didn't like getting used to anything, sugar, fat, salt, spice, '*much harder to do without*' he said. It was not uncommon to see him eating out of tins although his Friday evening love affair with fish and chips loaded with vinegar, endured. He purchased his clothes in local charity shops but was always immaculately dressed, complete with tie, hat, and weather-appropriate jackets. His clothes were always neatly pressed, shoes shined. He deplored the rise of the use-and-throw culture. The idea of throwing anything away was alien to him. He lived in council housing till the end of his days even when he had risen to a senior managerial position. He never

forgot his responsibilities to his family. A good portion of his wages and income provided for the wellbeing of his siblings, nieces, and nephews. He paid for their family holidays, university education, travel, even cars. He did not appear to get much in return. Not many of his family were present at his funeral.

Ken spent what was left of his wages in pursuit of learning. Even as a shopfloor worker, he would frequent Belgrave's local library. He borrowed books aplenty, read prodigiously, took night classes, learned, and read some more. His passion was industrial history and he travelled on bus and train searching out sites and museums showcasing British industrial history and heritage. He was also an admirer of German industrial history and often went on carefully planned and budgeted coach tours to Germany, visiting industrial sites including their car manufacturing plants. He took pictures, compiled notes, and maintained journals of his observations. Ken also gave generously to charities, almost always quietly, anonymously. He donated books to local schools, purchased texts and notebooks for poor pupils, and gave free maths tuitions to students. He always had time to stop and explain things to people, things about how the world and objects worked, about history and so on. Ken's entire life was dedicated to learning and sharing that learning with others. His wages were simply a means that facilitated that livelihood. He did not want nor asked for more.

The generation that followed him into factory work though viewed their wages very differently. For the native working classes, factories were indicative of a nation getting back on its feet. The mood was different, cheerful, more optimistic, hopeful, and pleasurable. Factories opened up all along Belgrave and Melton – textiles, hosiery, shoes, shoe machinery, light

engineering. It was not just the skilled workers but also the unskilled and semi-skilled who found plentiful work. The wages ensured a good lifestyle, aspirational, while also providing social affiliation, camaraderie, and security. This generation was also schooled in thrift and frugality but they never denied themselves anything, a trait that endures till today.

This is the baby boomer generation so beloved of marketers. Jane and Joe, Anne and Brian, Violet and Mick are all indicative of this generation, living the life of the quintessential well-off pensioner. They worked hard, saved into pensions, lived frugally, provided sensibly for their children, and are now spending the rest. Many moved into the property market quite late in their lives, investing their savings in a home and paying off the mortgage as speedily as they could. After retirement many have sensibly downsized to manageable properties, living in bungalows where they hope to live on for as long as they can instead of moving into care homes or sheltered housing. They are supported by good occupational pensions. Saga has been a lifeline for professional support on investments paying them occasional dividends. Their state pensions though are coming under increasing threat.

This generation resents being demonised for living prudently and managing their money well. They acknowledge that they have been lucky in having fairly stable employment during their working lives but now feel that they are not getting much from the system that they paid into honestly and unquestioningly all their lives. Health care services are tardy. Their free TV licenses may be taken away. They are increasingly being means tested for everything from bus

passes to winter fuel allowances. Many are honest enough not to claim their allowances as they are able to fund their own utility bills.

Everyday living is still a case of careful budgeting and watching pennies. Anne and Brian have a system of recording expenses in small notebooks. After a frugal breakfast, they set out to the shops every day bargain hunting.

Sometimes they go to the nearest retail park and take the car. They don't buy much but like to keep up with the latest offers. Both are enthusiastic adapters of technology. Brian spends a lot of time on his personal desktop computer hunting online for offers and coupons. He is enthusiastic and patient, often honing in on bargains for free meals and drinks. Anne is a fairly recent but keen convert to technology and has loved discovering the joys of e-books on Kindle, apps on her iPad – a wedding anniversary gift from Brian – and her own personal Amazon account without having to share her husband's. They love food but are not very adventurous with tastes, Brian less so than Anne.

They rarely venture into Belgrave, the place they lived and worked most of their lives. The place is unrecognisable from when they worked there, they say. They however agree to come along a bus ride with me, pointing out landmarks of what and how used to be, the butcher, the greengrocer, and the old grocery store. Anne has vivid memories of her little notebook she carried with her, carefully jotting down accounts of everyday expenses including housekeeping money she got from Brian, and settling accounts after payday week. She still gets housekeeping money from Brian and still uses her little notebook except there are no weekly accounts to settle. As soon as they arrive back home from the shops and before they start planning a light lunch for the day, Anne whips

out her notebook and carefully enters her expenses including the pennies she lends Brian for the parking meter. Anne still goes out with the 'girls' each week – to the pictures, the tea rooms, restaurants, book clubs, and walking. Brian similarly is precious about his leisure spend. He has been retired for decades and has not had a weekly pay system for even longer but his Friday evenings spent at the pub and working men's club is still sacrosanct. In over 50 years of marriage, they keep their finances – and personal spaces – fairly separate and independent from one another.

Violet and Mick's stories are very similar. They live frugally, shop carefully, are reliant on pensions, and keep financial affairs fairly independent from one another and from their children. They have supported their children where possible and have generously contributed to grandchildren's university education but are critical of it. They see a lot of higher education as impractical and a waste of time. They are proud of their working backgrounds and skills accumulated over a lifetime which are still put to good use. The women still sew and recycle clothes. The men still do skilled jobs around the house. Mick is in his 80s and has just put in a new kitchen all by himself for his grandson who has purchased a buy-to-let property behind Belgrave Road. He says his grandchildren are clueless about household jobs and is appalled at the idea of paying for tradesmen.

He still plays the lottery and prefers the Irish lottery in deference to his roots. Two years ago he won £570 on the lottery, an event that was greeted with great celebration and joy. He gave £200 to Violet, kept the rest for himself, bought himself a couple of shirts after much deliberation, and treated his mates to

drinks and a pub meal – on offers of course. He treated me to a pint and a slice of chocolate cake. I was the honorary guest. Friday Bingo evenings are religiously adhered to and he often clocks small wins.

Jane and Joe have similar attitudes to money. Unlike their friends, these two are childless, a subject they never discuss with anyone. Jane is somewhat bitter about memories, about what was, and nurtures resentment towards change and modern times. Joe is pragmatic and unsentimental. They live in a small bungalow in a quiet estate cul-de-sac just outside Leicester. Jane does not want to discuss Belgrave much and hates the changes there.

Joe is content with what life has to offer him. He takes an active interest in his neighbourhood watch, often going around to do errands for neighbours, cutting grass, trimming hedges, and pressure washing driveways. He has worked out a canny deal with estate agents who let properties in the estate where rental tenants do not take the same care of properties as home owners do. When lawns become overgrown or driveways become grimy between lets, he rings up the estate agents and offers his services – for cash of course – in return for maintaining the outside of the property. The neighbourhood looks tidy, the estate agents find it easier to let properties, and Joe gets paid cash which he then uses for drinks and meals at the pub – win-win.

Discussions at the pub are always lively and informed when it comes to money managing. The women are full of useful tips about collecting points, identifying cashback opportunities, and interest rates. None of them are comfortable with using credit cards, *'if I can't see it, it's not there...'* They are however canny

enough to latch on to offers from across different supermarkets and retailers, working out who offers the best cashback points, and spend accumulation on credit card including spending on groceries and petrol and spreading their money accordingly. A dizzying array of hints, tips, and suggestions and conversations replete with points, cash back, spend offers, interest payback on card balances fly over my head as I wonder how they manage to keep all of this straight. For a generation with little formal schooling they are remarkably numerate and sharp, often doing sums in their heads quickly and accurately. They always insist on paper statements and meticulously double and triple check statements. They are just as resentful of driving insurance premiums going up at their age as of cheque facilities being gradually withdrawn.

The men are similarly always on the hunt for a bargain. A compensation culture has crept in amongst them in the last few years and they have become adept at claiming for falls and injuries sustained. Brian fell and hurt his shoulder when his bus driver braked suddenly. His badgering of an injury claims solicitor has paid off handsomely and he has put that money down to good use for his next holiday. He and his friends share tips on how to complain to companies in return for freebies and compensation and how to switch providers and play them off against each other in order to secure a good deal. They all love a good bargain and love playing the lottery and bingo even more. Occasional bingo wins are spent in the pub, and part of the proceeds given to their wives for a little spend money.

Joe, Brian, Mick and their friends are very proud of who they are and how they worked and earned their living. They never ever refer to themselves or their

friends as working class. Social labels and categorisations mean nothing to them although on occasion, a nationalistic pride in their Welsh or Irish origins surfaces. They are proud of their practical abilities and skills to do things, their competencies, and their overall pragmatic approach to life, something they credit their factory working experiences for although they maintain a healthy contempt for factory bosses and union shop stewards alike, both of whom they loathe in equal measure. They admire and respect men who started up factories during the turn of the century or the inter-war years and kept them going through tough times.

These were men of a different generation, old-worldly, resilient, stoic, and unsentimental. Having served in the army themselves, Joe and his friends respect that very British demeanour, a respect they do not extend to the second and third generation children of the original factory founders who struggled to keep the factories running during times of plenty and eventually ran them into the ground when they were bought out by private equity or sold altogether to foreign ownership. Their biggest contempt is reserved though for unionists who they blame for letting the factories run to seed and indirectly contribute to their troubles. They refer to union shop stewards in the most unprintable of terms. They see the loss and closure of factories on Belgrave and Melton Roads as society's failure and lack of respect for all things proudly British – inventiveness, resourcefulness, stoicism, great engineering, manufacturing, camaraderie, and a quiet, solid, non-steroidal masculinity.

Apart from a home, solid pensions, and a livelihood, factory wages have provided these people with an aspirational lifestyle beyond the reach of their

parents' generations, a lifestyle on their own terms yet which affords them opportunities to indulge in their passions for leisure, travel, and entertainment. Despite their everyday thrift and frugality, this generation never hesitates to spend on leisure and entertainment pursuits. Though Belgrave's dance halls and picture houses are no more, they still take in theatre, musicals, and the occasional picture when possible in Leicester or farther afield in Birmingham and London.

Their biggest passion though is for travel. As young adults working in factories, they barely had any money for holidays except for the occasional seaside travel. Even honeymooning was restricted to Brighton or Blackpool. It is only towards the mid-1990s or nearing retirement that many have discovered the joys of overseas travel. Now most of them are in their 70s and 80s and are inveterate travellers. Tech-savvy and on first-name basis with their local travel agents, they constantly search out deals on cruises, sunshine breaks, and the occasional coach tours. These getaways take up a lot of planning time, energy, discussion, and careful scheduling for the winter months. Anne and Violet are keen gardeners and would never dream of going anywhere during their beloved English summers.

Cruises are a particular favourite and a lot of time, energy, and discussion is invested in planning cruise holidays, sometimes at least a couple of years in advance. For this generation, sea travel epitomises the aspirational glamour of their youth while combining a healthy childhood nostalgia for the seaside. No expenses are spared, no detail overlooked in what is an annual or a bi-annual life highlight. Cabins are carefully chosen. Spend money is frugally budgeted.

Alcohol allowances are double checked. A wardrobe is painstakingly assembled complete with boleros, furs, tuxedos, and cummerbunds. Gorgeous, exquisite vintage furs carefully packed away in the loft, are brought down, lovingly handled, and packed. Travel details including luggage are planned meticulously. Details of cruises complete with dancing, music, games, and food – lots of food, is shared with family and friends upon return.

To this generation, cruise holidays are the pinnacle of life achievements, the ability to afford what was once seemingly out of reach. It is aspirational and affirmative of income capacities but not so much social lines. Going on cruises helps them cross geographical boundaries but still occasionally throws up invisible and inviolable class lines. Ann and Violet recall friends from their factory working days who crossed over the class divide, some moving into white collar jobs, a few others marrying well.

Violet tells me about Linda, an old friend with whom she worked together at a local typewriter factory when both were teenagers. Linda came from a '*good family*' that had fallen on hard times but still retained her class ideals. Having gone to a better school, Linda was considered good enough to work as a senior cashier, a job that brought her into fortuitous contact with Ron, an up and coming banker who worked in the local branch of the then Midlands Bank as assistant manager. Quite naturally Linda and Ron met, courted, married, moved to the suburbs, raised children, sent them to Cambridge, and settled into a comfortable suburban life. Decades later, Violet and Mick ran into Linda and Ron on the same Caribbean cruise. Violet recollects in vivid detail and a hearty cackle, Linda's embarrassment at having run into an old friend, her polite

friendly chatter, her excuses to break away and how she never ran into Linda and Ron for the rest of the cruise on the same ship. Violet and Linda were on the same cruise ship paying similar prices but the social chasm between them could not be wider. A small factory shop floor and a narrow road that once was a shared space between them was now only an embarrassing spectral presence.

Nevertheless, cruises are a celebration of life and travel is life-affirming. It showcases a generation's energy, passion, and joy for living. Many of Joe's friends and contemporaries are dead or dying. Yet this lot are sanguine, unsentimental, and positive. They prefer to make the most of what they have and are determined to travel as much as their health will allow them to. They wish to live on in their homes for as long as they can but are careful enough to start planning for retirement homes, using their tech savviness to searching for sheltered living facilities and upcoming retirement villages in Leicestershire.

For other migrants who have lived and worked in Belgrave, managing money has not been marked by so much joy. Thrift, frugality, and ascetic tastes have been used not to pursue lives of learning or enjoyment but simply to stave off insecurity and poverty. Many Caribbean migrants arrived in the UK to work in low wage jobs and many stayed in those jobs till retirement. A significant part of their livelihoods was about using their wages to pay off debts back home or support extended families who relied on them. Many have since moved away to London and Birmingham but London living is largely supported by social housing, increasingly prohibitive and difficult on any wage. Many more have moved back to their Caribbean homelands. The pull of sunshine and warmth is

strong and the little money they have put away has helped establish small businesses, bar shacks, restaurants, and farm holdings.

Sunshine and warmth appears to be a binding factor in deciding savings and investments for other migrants as well. The Portuguese migrants arrived in Belgrave and set up businesses but did not stay here for long. Many preferred to move away to London to a larger Portuguese community and more lucrative business opportunities. This well-established and settled community in London has put its earnings to good use in buying up land and property in Portugal and investing in businesses, especially hotel and tourism. The European Union has made travel between both countries even easier. People flit back and forth on business, and escape UK winters by going back to their homes set amidst vast tree filled compounds, but still remember to claim their UK winter fuel allowances.

The sunshine and winter warmth is just as much an investment attraction for the South Asian migrant workers who have been in Belgrave since the 1950s. Many of these settlers have saved and invested in land, property, and business in India, often using these homes as their winter retreats. For many years now, these people leave Belgrave just after Diwali celebrations in October-November and go back to India for the winter, often returning only around Easter. Their houses in Belgrave remain locked and occasionally they ask their children or relatives to check in on the house for mail and other essentials. Otherwise winter is for warmth and a return to their roots.

The investments they make is also for the future. Many encourage their own

grandchildren and great grandchildren to seek their prospects in India, now an economic superpower where their future is likely to be brighter. For this community, money from wages was meant to be saved, not spent. The savings ethos is extremely strong amongst this community and has structured much of their lives here. These workers came from modest means and in comparison to the Caribbean community, were much better educated and came from more established backgrounds. Despite this, they went into low-skilled jobs in Belgrave's factories and offices. As factories expanded and wages grew, they saved as much as they could, initially to pay back family who funded their fares, and then to bring over families to settle here.

Many underwent extreme hardships and often took on second jobs. They were economic migrants, goal-oriented, and never forgot that they were in this country primarily to earn the kind of money that they would never be able to back home. Their families pitched in as well and it was not uncommon for women to take on small enterprises and jobs, chopping onions and peeling garlic for nearby restaurants, growing and selling vegetables and herbs, laundry, ironing, cleaning, sewing, embroidery, and making and selling chutneys, relishes, poppadums, and snacks outside factories and in the rail station. Every penny of money earned from these was saved.

Thrift, frugality, commitment to savings, and abhorrence of wastage is a common thread running through Belgrave's residents. A run down charity shop on the road functions as an informal savings and advice centre. J, a sprightly man in his 80s started this as a fashion store many decades ago but struggled to keep it going. He found that people liked buying hand-me-downs and started

stocking second hand clothes. Slowly the store became a charity shop where people could come in for purchasing all sorts of oddities. As wealth and poverty ran through successive waves of migrants in Belgrave, there was always a new migrant poorer than the last who needed cheap buys and didn't mind someone else's used items. Slowly though J found himself dispensing informal advice to people who walked through his shop doors, sharing his wisdom on everything from saving, thrift, where to find bargains, where to eat cheaply, money transfer services, to tips for passing ESOL, doing work permit and visa documentation etc. The emphasis though was on saving no matter how low the wages were. J is still at it today, preaching the virtues of frugality, decrying the use-and-throw mentality, and how easy it is to save if one is careful with money. He often asks me careful questions about what I do for a living, how much I spend, how much I save, and how I manage without a husband's earnings.

Not everyone is good at saving though. They overspend, live beyond their means, or simply fall into financial difficulties. During those hard times they borrow. There are many informal money lending practices on the road. RBP is one of those ageless women, possibly in her 90s, frail, rheumy eyed but sharp as a tack. She is a widow and is supposed to belong to one of the oldest settlers here, her family arriving in the early 1950s. Not much is known about her but she is well known in Belgrave Road. She often makes appearances in the bus stop or street benches at the corner of Law Road or Macdonald Road. This is where she conducts her money lending. She is barely literate. She carries a small notebook tucked inside her blouse under her saree and a blunt pencil behind her ear. In those yellowing, turmeric-stained pages, she has an elaborate system of scribbles, symbols, and notations, where numerals can be just about deciphered. A full record of who owes how much money can

only be gleaned by getting inside her head. Legend has it that she never forgets anything anyone owes her. She has a simple system of lending small amounts to people who then pay back a certain sum daily or weekly with interest in set number of instalments. RBP knows everything about her borrowers and never gives them more money than they can handle. She is clued into job situations, family circumstances, and personal habits of each person she lends to. Being refused by her is worse than failing a credit check.

Rumour has it that she never lends more than £500 at any time but typically people can borrow amounts ranging from £50-£250, paying back anything from £5-£10 instalments daily. She charges no set interest rates. Instead she negotiates a daily or weekly payback depending on a number of circumstantial factors. RBP confines most of her transactions to memory, occasionally making inscrutable notations in her little notebook. Trust is key here. In the absence of formal instruments of exchange, trust mediates the relationship between lender and borrower and I doubt very much if RBP has ever had a bad debt in her money lending 'career'.

This is only a continuation of money management practices in Belgrave during the 1950s. High street banks were not ubiquitous then and for many migrants, being able to send money home speedily and efficiently was critical. That money was a lifeline to many dependents back home. CP, one of the earliest settlers from the subcontinent in Belgrave, tells me how the informal system of money transfer, also known as *hawala* or *hundi* took place back in those days. People were slow to trust banks and post offices in a new country. They

preferred to do business face to face and were often forced to rely on informal money transfer systems where they would entrust their money to a local *hawala*. He in turn – there are some instances of women *hawalas*, but mostly men – would tap into his money transfer network and through the use of an elaborate system of chits, arcane symbols, colour-coded messages, and word-of-mouth trust, would ensure that cash transferred in Britain with no formal documents of authorisations or IOUs, would be handed over safely to the correct person in India a few days later. This system was quickly replaced by high street banks and post offices who realised the business potential of migrants sending home money. Pinto was one of the first people to help the local Westminster branch design a leaflet in Konkani advising the Goan community how to remit money to relatives in India.

There are however still one or two people who can be ‘reached’ in Belgrave to act as money conduits for people living outside the system, such as N, to help remit money to relatives back home. With no legal documentation and a passport with a visa overstay, N finds it difficult to operate a regular bank account without raising too many questions and still finds a way to send money home every month.

This system of savings, overseas investment, and money transfer is still prevalent on Belgrave and Melton Roads. The place is densely packed with branches of big name banks from the subcontinent – Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, Canara Bank, Bank of India, Habib Bank etc. – sitting side by side with HSBC, Santander, and NatWest. The banks from the subcontinent offer extremely competitive savings rates and provide a personal service that is

unmatched on the high street. Staff are often appointed from India on deputation, an overseas posting being akin to winning the lottery. They form personal relationships with customers, are often on a first name basis with them, and are seen as trustworthy. Daily banking is often a friendly social affair, staff recognising customer names and faces, making enquiries about the wellbeing of family members, often stopping for a chat and a natter, before attending to transactions.

Apart from old fashioned service, old fashioned money management practices are also widely prevalent. Many people still prefer to use cash and sometimes cheque. Anne and Brian, Violet and Mick complain that their travel agent now insists on card transactions rather than payment by cheque or cash. They don't see the logic of someone preferring money they cannot see over money they can. Many businesses on the road are still cash businesses. Some have notices saying card payments are not accepted. Cash allows people to keep an immediate handle on expenses.

There are dozens of small shops that advertise money transfer services, desk-to-desk couriers and services offering legal paperwork, overseas property investment, tax advice, couriers, and assistance on work permits, language and citizenship tests, visa documentation etc. Most appear legitimate businesses but some appear shady with questionable practices. I go into quite a few pretending to be an overseas student enquiring about settling in Britain through a work permit. I get answers ranging from erroneous to downright ludicrous. Some demand money upfront. Some are prepared to organise fake visas and permits fronted by questionable educational institutions. Some broach the idea of sham weddings. One shop owner wants to know if I would

be willing to go through a sham marriage for visa purposes and says he is experienced at arranging such things. Settlement will benefit my future earnings prospects he says.

Like most other things, money management practices also change with demographic changes. Old habits of thrift and savings seem to be dying slowly. Many complain about the appearance of pawn shops and betting shops on the street, saying this is not good for the road. The first entrants of high street retail chains on Belgrave and Melton Roads apart from the banks and the odd Subway seems to be Betting Shops. William Hill, Ladbrokes, Paddy Power, Betfred, and many new shops offering cash loans are springing up, more in Melton Road than Belgrave Road.

These shops are reflective of a more transient population demographic in Belgrave than hitherto experienced. Earlier migrants came here to settle. Current visitors seem not to want to do so, preferring instead to move on quickly. Their money management practices also seem less grounded and more fluid, interested in the here and now, the lure of quick gains and easy money rather than that earned through long years of hard work and sacrifice. However similar shops existed about sixty years ago and I see their reappearances under new names as only a revival of old practices, a cyclical rhythm of Belgrave.

CELEBRATING

The seasonal highlight of Belgrave Road is the celebrations for Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, which marks the festival calendar with the annual street lighting ceremony. Exact dates for the annual ceremony varies with the vagaries of the Hindu lunar calendar but usually falls mid-autumn during October-November. The ceremony brings with it a welcome burst of light, sound, and joy for the local community and everyone else who travels from near and far to take part in the celebrations.

As the disappointments of a typical British summer give way to the mellow calm of September and a mild nip in the air is felt, the first visible signs of celebratory preparations appear on the street. Diwali is presaged by *Navratri*, the festival of Nine Nights, which is traditionally associated with a range of auspicious practices and activities highlighted in the Hindu calendar, from enrolling children in school to the commencement of the Hindu accounting calendar. Festive anticipation builds up with the gradual appearance of posters in shop windows announcing dance programmes, music troupe shows, and special offers on fashion and jewellery sales. Shops are busy. Ethnic and non-ethnic people alike crowd the road on weekends, wandering around, shopping, browsing, eating, visiting friends, and relatives. The weather turns chilly and additional clothing layers appear. Diwali date draws close and local authorities start preparations in earnest. Decorations go up on the road. Street lamps and building exteriors are festooned with plastic and paper garlands in bright colours, adornments of lamps, flame- and pottery-shaped lights, floral wheels, assorted coloured bulbs – energy saving of course – while the Belgrave Community Centre building

sports lights shaped like a huge trident symbol and an Om engraved in native script. The words '*Happy Diwali*' are everywhere.

On the day of the lighting ceremony – usually a Sunday – preparations start full swing around 10am. Road diversions appear and traffic thins out slowly till it stops altogether. Belgrave Road is blocked off at the entrance and workmen get busy unloading heavy electrical and sound equipment and constructing a dais the width of the entire road. It is a quiet Sunday morning, the quietness a stark contrast to the usual buzz and sounds on the road. Activities pick up by afternoon as shoppers begin to throng the various eateries and establishments, wandering, walking, and absorbing the atmosphere. Music starts to make its presence felt by mid-afternoon, gentle Indian melodies in assorted languages playing inside shops giving way to a full blast of deafening Bollywood film songs blaring out from hidden speakers.

By late afternoon the buzz on the road is unmistakeable. Shops are lit up and stay open late, heaving knee deep in shoppers, some even queuing outside. The road takes on an exotic glow reflecting the dazzling lights from shop windows displaying elegant mannequins draped in ethnic fashions, gold and diamond jewellery, shiny silverware, fluorescent neon signs from eateries, and street lights. The atmosphere on the road now is an assault on the senses, blinding light, wafting aromas of foods, frying onions, steaming potatoes, spices, incense, musty woollens, and sweat, sounds and noises emanating from the crowds, spoken languages, and background music. Eager early birds head to the dais to snatch prime position on either side of the barricade.

Around 6pm or so, the main dais is lit and becomes the focal point for the celebrations. Music and dance programmes begin on the stage as groups of school children dressed in brightly coloured costumes and sparkling jewellery, perform to a range from the latest Bollywood hits to traditional prayer songs. Artists and performers appear and disappear while musicians play traditional Indian musical instruments on stage. The performances are amateurish, certainly far less professionally stage managed than those seen elsewhere such as in London and the whole atmosphere is like a 1970s version of school annual day celebrations showcasing stage performances of popular Indian 'culture' now inexorably associated with Bollywood.

The road is completely overwhelmed by humanity now, a sea of people, as thousands pack in the road. The atmosphere is good natured; people who have been enterprising enough to snag a spot near the dais call out to unseeing friends who in turn home in on the prime spot with unerring accuracy as if guided by an invisible beacon. Dignitaries, local celebrities, and VIPs start to slowly assemble on the stage.

Proceedings kick off. The prime focus of the celebration is that most quintessential of all British values – health and safety. The fire services chief is the first to appear. He makes routine announcements on safety procedures, signposts ambulance and emergency services stationed throughout, gently scolds people with reminders of 'accidents' from previous years, and warns everyone to ensure that celebrations are carried out safely. Local politicians, business and community leaders follow, with long winded speeches. A permanent fixture of these celebrations is Keith Vaz, the most prominent of all

Leicester MPs. He uses the opportunity to make a political statement, gently reminding the crowd how much he has done for them. I hear sniggers.

Santander is one of the main event sponsors so the bank chief makes a speech appealing no doubt to his 'market'. The crowd start to get restive now and there is a collective willing for speeches to end. Finally and to everyone's relief, the main business is close to hand.

On the dais is a giant brass lamp. A Hindu priest comes on stage and says prayers in low monotone Sanskrit. The lamp is lit and a countdown starts to chime in the background. Ten. Nine. Eight. Seven....and so it goes until it is time. The switch is flicked. Suddenly the entire road is filled with magic. As the electric currents course through wires strung across street lamps, little bursts of light travel down the length of the road like tiny wavelets. A collective series of ooohs and aaahs go up. There are cheers and clapping. Phones and cameras flash. The entire road is now lit, bright, magical, charming, obscuring the grim realities of the road. All the sights of rotting woodwork, run down shops, boarded up windows, grimy terraced houses caked with dirt and smog, shabby frontage have all disappeared, to be bathed in the glow of the street lights. The crowd stands still for a brief moment taking in the lights before it starts to stir, turn away from the dais, and move down the length of the road.

Dignitaries and VIPs have walked off. Keith Vaz comes off the stage and accompanied by his wife and children, starts mingling with people. A nod here, a brief word there, an enthusiastic hand shake for a select few, accompanied by aides and hangers-on who bend down and try to catch his soft-spoken words, Vaz works the crowd smoothly, establishing and reinforcing his position as

patron of celebrations. The crowd though is no longer paying attention as the real celebrations are happening elsewhere on the street. There is impromptu singing and dancing on the road, mini-parties, thronging crowds, revellers, street vendors skilfully wending their way through the crowds selling everything from cotton candy to glo-lit accessories. The local radio station has a stand, playing loud music, and announcing prize competitions. Shops are heaving and eateries are doing roaring business, having ditched their a la carte menus for buffets, steaming vats of curries in stainless steel drums. People eat on the street. The atmosphere is deafening, intense, and strangely elating. Residents throng the streets watching and vicariously participating in the carnivalesque atmosphere.

There is now a definite rhythm as the crowd moves slowly towards Cossington grounds for the much-awaited finale of the night's celebrations – fireworks. All the evening's excitement is now building up to this moment as the crowd crawls the short distance from the dais to the grounds. The grounds are edged by tall trees where the fireworks have been planned and prepared, emergency services on standby, the crowds barricaded and set beyond heavy equipment and safety barriers. Singing and dancing goes on non-stop as music blares out from the speakers.

Finally the moment everyone has been waiting for arrives. After the mandatory preliminary announcements, the countdown starts again, and then suddenly here it is....fireworks. Mild and gentle at first, they build anticipation, gradually producing more intense, more spectacular displays, throwing up all kinds of shapes from rockets to fire-breathing dragons, long-tailed snakes, and pretty floral displays. The fireworks carry on for a good fifteen minutes

accompanied by the noise of cheering crowds, gasps, screams, and blaring music. It intensifies and builds up a crescendo with a non-stop display of sound and fury, finally dying down in a long-drawn out orgy of fire, heat, and light. As the fireworks slow down, it takes a few moments for the crowds to realise that the display is now well and truly over. The crowds start to move slowly back to their respective destinations, homes, and cars. The road slowly returns to something approaching normalcy. Traffic has resumed. Crowds are thinning. Some shops are still doing business. The road is awash in a sea of litter and the cleaning crews start to make their ways in. The dais is dismantled and cleared; traffic starts to flow again. Lights stay on for a couple of weeks, are switched off, and then switched on back again in time for Christmas.

This festival scenario playing out annually on Belgrave Road establishes it as an Indian ethnoscape and cements Leicester's multicultural reputation. The origins of Diwali celebrations in Belgrave Road is widely believed to have coincided with the arrival and settlement of the East African Gujarati Indian community during the late 1960s and early 1970s. From newsagents and hardware stores to shops selling more exotic paraphernalia such as ethnic fashions, jewellery, spices, groceries, and scores of vegetarian restaurants, the new settlers opened up shops many of which are still trading today.

Most of those community members still retain homes and businesses in the area although few continue to live here, having long departed to more upmarket suburbs in Leicestershire and elsewhere. Having made their wealth through their trading businesses, the community has moved on, their homes on rent and

the shops run by underlings. An overwhelming number of community members I spoke to have ambivalent feelings towards their Indian ethnicity. Most feel 'African' by heritage, anchored by a strong cultural connection to the homeland they fled, tinged by nostalgia for the privileged lifestyles they had to abandon in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Targeted for their Indian ethnicity and forced out of Africa, the community nevertheless eschewed the cultural familiarity of India and chose instead to settle in England out of unsentimental pragmatism. Many still speak with a barely concealed contempt for the grime, heat, and poverty of India and their superior social status over other Indian migrants.

There is however no conflict with how the community has established itself as the curator and custodian of Indian 'culture' appropriating its iconography for socio-economic reasons. When shops opened up in the 1970s on Belgrave Road trading in cultural exotica, it was more to do with reasons of canny commercialism and establishing business links with one another, and less for bridging multiple selves of cultural identity lost amidst political upheavals. Yet the shops and the resulting ethnoscape formation around Belgrave Road has coalesced into a formidable socio-economic and cultural capital resource around local authorities, political, and business interests. It has ensured that Diwali celebrations remain a firm feature of the annual landscape, as it continues to bring in footfall and visitor numbers to the area, invaluable for local businesses.

Even during the relatively short time I have been studying the road, I find its intensity waxing and waning like the vagaries of the weather. One year, warmed by nothing more than a thin cardigan, I wend my way among the crowds who recall with nostalgia, how the roads around Belgrave Road and

Leicester used to be chockfull of coaches and mini-vans bringing in busloads of people from around the country to celebrate an 'Indian' festival. Now there are none.

Ethnic minorities are among the fastest growing population demographic in the UK and almost every major city has its own Diwali celebrations, bigger, bolder, brighter. Another year as I struggle to hold up my camera in the freezing cold despite two layers of woollen gloves I get chatting to a group of French students doing an English course at nearby Loughborough College. They are visiting on the instructions of their teacher to write an assignment on the celebrations.

They sound bemused and slightly awed at the show. Another year I can barely hear my own thoughts in the bitter rain as I talk to a group of nurses and healthcare assistants working at the nearby Leicester hospital, recent economic migrants into the country from South India, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines. They are chuffed at being able to find so many aspects of a life left behind – food, celebrations, and atmosphere – all in one road.

Some youngsters recall fond memories of going to India during Diwali celebrations and being amazed at how every home has its own fireworks display – often non-stop – for days on end around the Diwali festive season, a competitive showmanship between neighbours vying to outdo one another. Gathering up thousands within one small spot and putting on a contained 15 minute fireworks display under the strict watchfulness of health and safety is poor compensation. Some other youngsters having grown up around the area but now charmed by the bigger cities of Birmingham and London, compare the celebrations unfavourably. The ones in London are bigger and more

professionally managed they say. This one is '*amateurish*' and the place '*is a dump*'.

Each year the council faces a bigger struggle to fund the decorations and celebrations amidst spending cuts, pressures from festival organising committee, political interests, business and community requests, and fears of being perceived as discriminatory if they axe budgets. Santander has spotted a lucrative market opportunity amongst a community known for its thrift, savings, and frugality, and has established a strong presence on the road through its canny sponsorship move. Santander's chief is as familiar a face now at the celebrations as his bank's corporate logo is a ubiquitous presence through its hospitality tents on the road. Its shiny big branch has a separate doorway now adorned with a 20ft image of Keith Vaz, promising passersby to remain '*by your side*'. Diwali is now the Hindu version of Christmas – irreligious, secular, commercial, and one big blow-out.

Reaching back through time and layers of memories, I glimpse faded vignettes of celebrations past. Young men from the subcontinent who migrated into the area during the 1950s to work in post-war Britain's shoe and textile factories lived in shared bed-sits, learning to cook, clean, and fend for themselves without their womenfolk. Diwali especially seems to have been a bitter-sweet occasion, caught between joys past and practicalities present of homelands. Over many months of chatting, these men, mostly now in their 80s, reminisce and share their memories with me. Like sprinkles of confetti, they come. Indifference, racism, hostility, neighbourly abuse from smells of spices cooking. Cold. Rain. Always the rain. No spices or ethnic foods or groceries. Not like

today where curry is national food. Through those memories shines through pride at how they still manage to organise their private Diwali celebrations, cook special meals without the help of women, feast, pray, and relay the success of their efforts back home through a scratchy long-distance trunk call made from the local post office. Even when they managed to save enough to bring their families here, the celebrations stayed mostly private. I ask them if they go to the street festivities each year. They don't. It feels strangely disconnected and unfamiliar, they tell me.

Celebrations are carried on in comparatively private surroundings within the Belgrave Community Centre, one of the anchor points for this older generation of migrants still living in and around the road. During Diwali, they congregate here as they do every day, construct a makeshift prayer site, offer prayers, and organise a festive meal courtesy of council community welfare services and a couple of elderly cooks. The men sit around chatting. The women pray and sing songs. The festive lunch is a highlight, one anticipated eagerly each year, over all too soon till it comes around next year. Hopefully.

Navratri, the Hindu Festival of Nine Nights, is another celebration that lends colour to the road and its residents. It is commemorated to celebrate the vanquishing of demons by Hindu goddesses of power and courage. It typically precedes Diwali by a few weeks in the Hindu lunar calendar and is considered auspicious to start off many practices from enrolling children in school and new classes to the start of the Hindu trading and financial accounting year by small family businesses. Books, tools, vehicles, equipment, and all other sources of livelihood are venerated and worshipped during this time. It is also a time for forging new connections. New schools, new jobs, new purchases, new

business deals, new connections and networks, new matchmaking alliances, new property transactions, all take place during this time.

I follow up on one of the shop window posters and invite myself to a couple of *Navratri* celebrations – one in the rundown Belgrave Community Centre – where I am the youngest participant by at least three decades – and a second one in the shiny new lottery-funded Peepul Centre which functions like an upmarket networking club filled with very successful cosmopolitan second and third generation Gujarati Indians. The contrast between both celebrations could not be starker. From the simple, rudimentary, quiet, and contained celebrations of an older generation in the community centre to the shiny dazzling bling of silks and gold and diamonds at the Peepul Centre, the same festival becomes two different statements of belonging and performance. The latter is very much a show of strength and pride from a community that has achieved much from humble and often unhappy origins in Britain. *Navratri* then becomes an occasion to celebrate wealth, prosperity, health, and pray for the good fortune to continue.

A central feature of the *Navratri* celebrations is the performance of the *ras garba* a collective communal dance, more an amble, less a performance but definitely an art form. I never tire of watching this dance being performed in assorted venues during the celebrations over the years. Participants form a rough circle in the centre of the floor. The circle has no defined shape or boundary, just a collection of people who gently and naturally form a circle. Men, women, and children join in, shuffle and amble to the beat of gentle folk music, a few turns to one side, a few half turns to the left, the body moving in circular and counter-circular movements, hands keeping beat, to the side, to the front, above the

heads, never missing a step. As one they move along the circle, and the circle moves along with them. Through the shifting shapes and flashes of silk and gold and diamonds, the circle gently undulates, holding its shape, its contours undisturbed, its rhythm uninterrupted, even as people drop in and out of the dancing circle. When I see the dance being performed, I visualise a microcosm of place through its rhythms, a gentler, less ostentatious way of celebrating life on the road.

The intensity of Diwali and the genteelness of Navratri celebrations seen on public spaces on the road overlay faded memories of Christmas celebrations long past. Some of these memories are still held on to by those who lived in and around Belgrave over past decades. Rudi, a fourth-generation Portuguese immigrant shares his childhood memories of family Christmas celebrations as he walks about with me down Melton Road. I have invited him down from Oxfordshire where he lives now and he relives his childhood Christmas celebrations for me, replete with the tastes of cod and potatoes as their traditional Christmas Eve meal, the smell of incense and candle from mass at the Holy Cross church, the sight of family and friends gathered around, drinking, laughing, and dancing. Much dancing he says, and even jigs for me as we walk down the road.

Sherlyn's frail limbs on the other hand are not strong enough to imitate Rudi's jives but her memories of dancing are just as strong. Sherlyn is a first generation Jamaican and practically the only one in her community still living in the area. We sit in her living room sipping tea. She is old, almost ancient, her fading eyes coming alive as she talks about family festive celebrations always around the same themes – cooking, lots of food, family, friends, dancing,

music, and her great Lord Jesus, her anchor, her Saviour. Christmas was also the time when she managed to exchange more than pleasantries with her white working class neighbours. Her recipe for Jamaican Christmas cake has transcended several class and racial barriers down the row of terraced houses, even surviving the inflow of Indian migrants from Africa in the 60s to be adapted into an eggless version.

The Christmas celebrations that once rang out through the midnight masses across church pews or manifested as parties in dance halls and pubs are now muted. Most of the white working classes have moved away as have the Portuguese and Jamaican communities. Ken saw Christmas as a time for peace and quiet, an opportunity for long walks, to catch up with books unread, or the occasional foray on a coach tour to Germany. He worshipped science and had no time for religion or celebrations.

For Jane and Joe, Anne and Brian, Violet and Mick, is more to do with holidays to warmer climes or pub lunches. Never of a religious orientation, church going practices have waned and disappeared amongst these people. Christmas is now about alcohol, parties at home, pub meals, or preferably holidays away to escape the winter. For the more middle classes who moved out of Belgrave in the 1950s church going traditions and by extension Christmas celebrations are more strongly entrenched which continue till this day. For migrants from the subcontinent, family and home-based celebrations of Diwali and Navratri are now overshadowed by the public street lighting ceremony. But change is in the air already. Over the past five years there has been a strong but steady influx of migrants from Bangladesh, Somalia, and Nigeria. There is already talk of repurposing a rundown restaurant at the Belgrave-Melton crossroads. There

are more halal butchers now at the end of the road which many locals still see as Belgrave. Cultural sensitivities are now more obvious during Ramadan fasting and there are murmurs and discussions but not out loud.

All through the change, on the road, inside homes, across shops and restaurants, celebrations and preparations continue on. Wedding season follows festive season follows wedding season again. Cultural identities appear and disappear. Humanity ebbs and flows. Means and modes of festive joy change. Spaces and times of celebration mutate but reasons for celebrating remain constant in Belgrave.

GRIEVING

The public and often communal nature of celebrations sometimes masks a process of grieving in private. Loss and bereavement is a tangible, sentient presence on Belgrave, evident in roads, buildings, houses, boarded-up windows, ruins, street furniture, besides individual and collective memories.

Belgrave is understood and perceived here as beyond a single road.

Encompassing a wide swathe of land that includes Melton Road and the branch off to Loughborough Road to the north and north-west, city gates, Abbey Road, and cemetery to the south and south west, the built environment and landscape is an integral expression of memories, words, depths of feeling that often convey loss and grief. Grief is expressed for many things – the tangible loss of home, lands, property, belongings, lives, and loved ones, the intangible loss of communities, culture, ways of life, modes of action, and senses of being.

Belgrave's history threads through a series of eventful passageways of occupations, community, culture, heritage, and social markers. Its origins and centuries-long existence as an agricultural landscape sitting on lush countryside is now lost to the relentless, pitiless assault of urbanisation whose violent cacophony, grime, and concrete has ridden roughshod over Belgrave's gentle pastoral idyll. Some remnants of this lost past is still visible in glimpses of the River Soar, its tinkling waters gleaming silver in the summer sun edging the lush meadows at the entrance of Belgrave Gate, as it wends through Abbey Park. Belgrave's agrarian, rural past and sylvan blue skies have been lost to the onward march of industrial revolution and rows of smokestack chimneys that

built much of Leicester's prosperity. Gentler, collective, personal ways of communal farming was lost to impersonal, mechanistic factory working which in turn has disappeared to give way to trading and retailing.

Some remnants of its feudal past is still preserved in Belgrave Hall, now a council-owned heritage museum open to the public on select days. The Hall itself has passed through multiple deaths, dynasties, and family inheritances and now stands sentinel at Belgrave's edge, its disinterred buildings part crumbled, part preserved, arts and antiques lost, council-maintained gardens and hanging baskets gained, revived from obscurity into heritage site. Its history and memories are now enclosed within its walled gardens now only apparent in random paranormal occurrences and ghost sightings, perhaps lost souls grieving for what was.

A more palpable, acute sense of loss is still felt from the decline and eventual disappearance of factories dotting Belgrave and Melton roads and its surrounding environs. The rise and fall of the road's industrial heritage is closely tied to its shoe, textile, shoe machinery, and hosiery factories to which hundreds anchored their personal and professional identities and sense of being. From the turn of the century through the in-between war years on to Britain's post-war reconstruction, these factories saw scores of people from peasants, white working classes, to waves of overseas migrants coming into work, producing goods that made Leicester's wealth and reputation.

Industrial decline and the gradual closure of factories has affected earning capabilities as well as people's sense of self and worth. The most tangible

aspect of this is the loss of the local Belgrave rail station, a victim to the Beeching railway cuts. The rail line was a lifeline, depositing hundreds of workers for their factory shifts each day, a critical connection from the Midlands to the north providing cheap coastal getaways for the working masses. When it closed, industrial decline was not far behind.

The evidence of loss and decline is everywhere. Despite the glittering façade of jewellery and fashion shops that are clustered roughly towards the centre of Belgrave Road, the signs of struggle and eventual defeat are unmistakable. Lofty red-bricked factory buildings sport graffiti and grime on their Victorian facades, their once huge windows denuded of glass panels cracked or missing. Shops open and close frequently, their neon signs vandalised. Boarded-up windows and door notices signify financial losses, and the loss of professional hopes and dreams.

Old factories are now housing developments and apartment blocks. One is now a makeshift temple, set up with donations from the Gujarati Indian community to honour memories of one of their earliest, oldest members. Mechanical factory floor noises of creation are now replaced by the soothing sounds of ritualistic prayers of loss and bereavement. Even Gods are lost. Churches that dotted the road gathering the faithful and offering up their worship to unseen Gods, have now lost their sense of purpose, many decommissioned by the CoE. The railway line has been lost to a supermarket which in turn has cut its losses by giving up the site, now bare and empty. An Asian funeral home on Melton Road taps into a niche market segment for culture-specific grieving rituals. The Abbey Road cemetery, is cut off from the community it was intended to serve by an ill-

thought out flyover, which itself has been pulled down during the course of this study.

Memories are laced with a sense of bereavement about a past way of life. Jane and Joe Ashton, now in their 80s, were a typical white working class couple. They are a fund of stories about Christmas parties, dance halls, 'courting', gin rummies, darts, pool, music, dancing, and merriment. The dance halls and pubs and picture houses have disappeared while the Ashton's memories of communal celebration is tinged with a sense of loss and indeed bitterness and a way of life that is now no more. Sherlyn, my Jamaican friend, sits in her living room, a rug on her knee, old and frail, her fragile hands barely able to hold up the cup of tea I made her in her tiny kitchen. She talks about loneliness, the grief of having buried her little daughter who died of pneumonia aged eight in the Abbey Road cemetery, a place she is too frail to visit now. She misses her Jamaican rum cakes, her family around the table, the simple life that was anchored by Sundays spent in church. During the last years of this study, she has disappeared too. Her house first empty, later tenanted, and no one can tell me where or if she is.

The migrants who arrived here during the 1950s from the subcontinent are all now in their late 1970s or older. The Belgrave neighbourhood community centre is now their anchor point, the highlight of their daily existence. Elderly men and women sit here every day, in rooms at either end of the entrance, as if cleaved by an invisible hand into a gender-segregated social space. The men at first appear to be a jolly bunch, laughing, playing cards – '*never for money*' – whiling away time until lunch. Hidden beneath the heartiness is loneliness and

bereavement, the unspeakable loss of a wife, homemade meals never cooked for them anymore, children who never visit because they are distant, busy, and indifferent, homelands they visit when they can but which feels strange and alien, the land where they have lived for the past 50 years which feels even stranger and more alien. Some have been lucky to have worked in factories till retirement but some occupations were brutally cut down by the closure of factories, bus, and rail services, causing many to eke out a living in menial jobs until retirement. It brings a strange sense of rejection, a loss of purpose.

The womenfolk deal with grief more quietly, and often in silence. Many do not speak English. Widowhood is terribly oppressive. Their days are spent sitting in silence in the community centre, occasionally chatting, sometimes playing board games, mostly praying silently till it is time for lunch. This is the only human contact they have; grief and loss festers beneath. In the past years I have become a familiar face at the centre, their initial suspicions giving way to a smile, a nod, an acknowledgement. I don't understand a word they say but they don't say much. I sit with them often, side by side on rickety chairs for hours on end. Sometimes one of the ladies takes my hand in hers as she counts prayer beads in her other. We sit together in silence. As I turn to look at her, I often wonder if I am looking at myself somewhere in the future.

The Indian migrants who arrived from Africa a decade or so later are in comparably better socio-economic circumstances but their loss is just as tangible, tinged with bewilderment. They led lives of relative prosperity as an elite minority in Africa, only to be targeted for their very ethnicity by a rising tide of African nationalism. Many often had to leave their entire lives, property, and belongings behind within the space of a week, their lives suddenly uprooted

and disrupted. Many were lucky not to be targeted physically but that does not make their grieving for a life left behind any less bearable.

The Sri Lankan community though have more personal and harrowing tales of loss tinged with violence. They congregate at the community centre on Saturdays, often travelling from far for language lessons and other gatherings. Their past is one filled with displacement, violence, loss of loved ones, homeland, belongings, and lives. The older generation grieve for that which they cannot take for granted any more, sunshine, coconut trees, fresh sea food, but their loss is tinged with vivid memories of horror and violence, burning tyres, dead bodies, sounds of gunfire, dangerous boat crossings, and almost always being caught in the middle. They grieve that their children who grew up as asylum seekers and refugees in strange lands, have never known a childhood or homeland. One elderly lady grieves for her son who has turned a life rocked by instability into one of crime and drug dealing.

One man tells me of his hardship in attempting to find the whereabouts of his in-laws following the 2004 tsunami, the difficulties of getting a visa to travel with a two-month old, the fruitless search for their relatives who were never seen again. N is an illegal migrant. He came here on a tourist visa alongside a music troupe, disappeared through the cracks in the system, and is now eking out a living doing menial jobs. He lives every day in fear of being caught, works for cash, sleeps on the floors of bedsits and makeshift rooms in restaurants where he cleans, sometimes sleeping rough. He is even more afraid of returning home, at the loss of face, prospect of shame, of being a failure.

Grief and loss plays itself out within the walls of the community centre and beyond but often privately. There is a silent dignity in this grief. People gather within the community centre to connect to each other through their common losses or meet up in bus stops or roadside benches like I often do with J. He has moved here from Tanzania but never gets to see his daughters or grandchildren any more. He hates it here, feels almost aggrieved that his wife pre-deceased him, and wonders why someone would want to know about his life. He sits on the roadside bench for hours on end everyday watching traffic and crowds whiz past. Community centre. Roadside bench. Abandoned bus stops. The Mahatma Gandhi statue - having done its duty to prop up Indian culture, now abandoned, unkempt, and neglected, fenced away behind iron railings. The Brahmo Samaj building, once the symbol of a religious emancipation movement. Now boarded-up, forgotten.

Loss and bereavement is also nurtured within homes, often memorialised through everyday objects as artefacts of grief. Jane Ashton's vintage dresses, dainty purses, boleros, and even a mink coat which is wrapped away like a dirty secret, all in immaculate condition, are now being given away to charity because she cannot bear to look at them anymore. Sherlyn's cake recipe written out in her now barely legible spidery crawl on yellowing paper, is a more potent reminder of her grief than the child she buried in Abbey cemetery. KB Patel handles his vintage Fotostore Heritage album, exquisite in blue and green and gold, reverentially. Photo albums gathered families around memories and were shown off like prized possessions, he says. Photographers like himself were much in demand. Nowadays photos are like a million confetti thrown and

dispersed in the air, meaningless and disposable, as technology digitises memories, scattering them through ether. He grieves for the demise of a slice of history that believed in preserving things through tangible possessions.

One lady talks about leaving behind her red and gold silk wedding saree back in Africa. She has kept strands of threads from the border like a precious heirloom. Another tells me about the mango tree she nurtured in her front yard over twenty years, its shade filled with memories of children, fruit, scent, and afternoon naps, only to watch it being burned down in the riots. N fingers his faded *rakhi* wristband, an eternal symbol of loving bonds between sister and brother. His sense of loss is tied to his failure at being a brother, at being unable to help his little sister in India get married and not being able to earn enough for her dowry.

Loss is everywhere here – the loss of identity, liberty, freedom, homeland, citizenship, innocence, being, and belonging. Public spaces of celebration sit side by side with private spaces of grief.

EATING

Eating is serious business in Belgrave. Whether done at home or outside, the practice of eating is treated with utmost reverence, approached with diligence, given prime place of thought, action, and expense, and accompanied by almost no feelings of guilt, remorse, self-loathing, or self-flagellations. People openly enjoy the act of eating.

Belgrave Road is a thriving urban road abuzz with traffic in and out of the city. The road is flanked either side by rows of shops, many of which are restaurants. It would actually be a stretch to call these restaurants as they are typically known and understood. Instead these are simply eateries or eating establishments, traditional, homely, non-descript, and untroubled by distractions of décor, table reservations, fancy menus, furnishings, celebrity chefs, or brand ‘concepts’. They are simply sites dedicated to eating, mostly vegetarian food. Other than a lone Subway, high street food chains have not established themselves here. Yet. There are a couple of ice cream parlours, a shop dedicated to the glories of the spud in all its myriad forms, sweet shops, a couple of Punjabi restaurants serving the more robust North Indian non-vegetarian foods, a couple of kebab shops that have come and gone, but otherwise mostly establishments serving predominantly Gujarati and South Indian vegetarian food.

The road is a paean to the Gujarati community’s culinary preferences, their staunch vegetarianism, their love of all things sweet, and diehard, incessant

snacking. Many of these establishments were started in the early 1970s and are still going strong. The food here is not what passes for typical Indian food and the curries only bear a passing resemblance to the over-spiced, rich, greasy, oily, reddish-brown catch-all 'Indian curry' so beloved of British culinary tastes. The foods here showcase the flavours of west and south India, milder, genteel, homely, flavourful, fragrant, spicy, and appealing to a broad base of pan-Indian culinary tastes. They are the same kind of foods that millions of people cook in their own homes yet the pull of eating out is strong. Menus are dominated by Gujarati and pan-South Indian dishes alongside a variety of small eats that can be eaten as snacks or main meals any time of day or night. Although not as ubiquitous as the typical curry house, these cuisines are slowly but surely becoming popular across rest of the country.

The eateries seem somewhat trapped in time, the more recent ones identifiable only because the paint looks fresher and the furniture is less scuffed. Interiors are functional, décors are simple, faded, and utilitarian. Spaces are furnished with cheap Formica tables and chairs. Wall decorations are laminated posters of special dishes in enlarged close up, hung alongside framed photos of Hindu deities decorated with crumbling garlands and forehead markings. Cutlery is plain, often stainless steel, and food is plated on banana leaves. There is no room for fripperies. The attention is on the food. Many establishments do a regular lunchtime buffet, a bigger version of the Indian *thali* meals which consist of a range of mild Indian curries, vegetable side dishes, relishes, and yoghurt accompanied by unlimited quantities of rice and breads, and a couple of sweets to finish off. A la carte menus display a range of stand-alone dishes as found in any take away as well as a few cosmopolitan versions of pizzas or noodles but there are not many takers for

these. Some eateries offer an added non-vegetarian option in the buffet, in a discreet part of the restaurant. This is in response to changing tastes among customers who tend to be meat eaters, non-Gujarati ethnic, or even English people. The establishments owned and operated by the Gujarati community still only serves vegetarian foods.

Food is ridiculously cheap. Gut-busting meals can be had for about the price of a sandwich meal deal, slightly less than what it would cost in Pret. Buffets offer unlimited portions. Even a la carte menu items are generously portioned.

People are invited and encouraged to eat as much as they want but wastage is frowned upon. Almost all eateries carry notices warning people not to waste food, and reminding them of a surcharge on food waste.

From noon to night all the eateries are busy, even more during weekends. They draw all kinds of people, office crowds looking for cheap lunches, visitors with friends and family, shoppers exhausted from traipsing around the jewellery and fashion shops, and are predominantly from the sub-continent with a few non-ethnic customers as well. What they all have in common is an enjoyment of eating. Food is tasty, cheap, and plentiful. Rules on wastage are taken seriously. Perhaps it adheres to an innate sense of thrift and frugality but also socio-cultural norms that consider food to be precious and wasting it a sin. Feeding and being fed is a privilege; wastage is an insult to both the food and the feeder.

One eatery displays a notice encouraging people to use their hands while eating Indian food; it is best relished using one's hands as everything tastes

better that way. The impersonal materiality of metallic cutlery is both a sensory and emotional barrier it seems. Many heed the notice or try valiantly.

Food is both social and sensory enjoyment as people cheerfully dig in unheeding of dietary restrictions, fuss, or faddish pretensions. Over time I have eaten in many of these establishments, in the company of study participants, often as a means of sharing in their perceptions and experience. AP comes here once a month regularly just to sample the foods that she often makes at home. She calls it an *'itch that needs scratching'*. For a young child suddenly uprooted from a safe environment in Kenya and having arrived in a new, colder, more bewildering place, food was emotional sanctuary, the smells and sights of it a reminder of something warm and comforting. Making the seamless transition from home food to that served in Belgrave's eateries, AP found that food and expressions of it helped shape her experiences in a new country. She describes the sights and sounds of grocery stores on Belgrave as she grew into a young adult, the vegetable stalls laden with ethnic fruit and vegetables, especially mangoes, glistening yellow golden.

Nearly forty years of living in Britain and she has never been able to recapture those images in a supermarket which she describes as being aseptic and sterile. Now with a family of her own, every month she drags her husband and grown up sons to come here, do her shopping, and visit one of the many eateries for a bite. Her sons grumble as they think the place is hideous. Her husband, an immigrant from the subcontinent who has lived in Britain for about 25 years, finds the entire road grimy and unpalatable. He thinks it is a waste of money to be spending on food one cooks at home but there is no arguing with

his wife. Meals at her home are communal affairs, all the women pitching in to cook and serve and share with me, their memories of food and growing up in and around Belgrave.

AB is a third generation British Indian, a cardiologist now working in the US. Belgrave's eateries were a childhood sanctuary for him, an escape from the weekday horrors of school meals where vegetarianism was a foreign concept. He makes an annual pilgrimage here less for the food and more for the chance to relive his memories. R is an elegant Englishman in his 50s who grew up in a very middle class family around Melton Road. His memories of Belgrave help me recreate the locations of other types of eateries that stood on Belgrave and Melton Roads even as I introduce him to the gentler, milder tastes of west and south Indian food, instruct him on the correct order and sequence with which to eat these foods, and watch as he gamely wrestles with the intricacies of eating without cutlery.

L is a 50-something loud, boisterous white Lancashire native. She loves the food here and even more loves the idea of dressing up in native costume. She is the centre of attention as she sits in her bright electric blue traditional Indian saree alongside her husband, son, and daughter as she samples the dishes in an eatery. MC is a recent arrival in Leicester, originally from Kerala, India now working as a nurse in a nearby hospital. Her family lives with her and she loves the road and all its eateries, loves the idea that she can come on a leisurely weekend shop with family, buy fresh ingredients from the small shops including meat from the halal butchers on Melton Road, and take in the culinary delights of South Indian foods.

My own perception of eating in Belgrave and Melton Roads has gone through multiple emotional iterations. When I started the field study I was pleasantly surprised to see eateries serving foods of my childhood and I indulged in them on my own and in the company of my participants. It gave me a chance to observe the eateries, but I also appreciated the opportunity to sit down, catch my thoughts, and more importantly use the facilities since there was nowhere else on the road apart from the community centre I could go to. My initial positive responses quickly soured as my body started rebelling against the heavy, carb-laden, sugary treats. Even simple meals would cause me great discomfort and sleepless nights. As the patina of nostalgia faded, it was obvious that many of my participants agreed with me too. Their visits became less frequent, their enjoyment in food less obvious. People eating in the establishments have a healthy relationship with their food but I am not so sure the food has such an equally healthy relationship with them. My critical eye spots obesity and a ticking Type 2 diabetes time bomb everywhere and I slip into judgement when I espy overweight people indulging in food without self-control.

Other aspects of the culinary landscape become obvious over time. The service in the eateries have worsened. The food quality has become indifferent. Many establishments are struggling to maintain standards of food and service. Many cooks are ageing or have retired. Replacements are hard to come by especially willing friends or family or people volunteering to work for low wages. Owners struggle to maintain retail business, preferring instead to concentrate on the more lucrative catering trade which is flourishing thanks to the ethnic

community's propensity for conspicuous consumption and flashy weddings. Some restaurant owners are extending into food supply chains, franchise distribution for big name ethnic foods brands, wholesale importing, and in one case even bulk production of ethnic greens and herbs.

I find the atmosphere comparatively pleasant and less intense than the culinary ethnoscaples of Brick Lane or Southall or Star City or any of the dozens of ethnic urban areas but the rundown, somewhat indifferent feeling is hard to miss. The road seems to have reached saturation point around vegetarian eateries. Over the years many of them are struggling. One or two have undergone frequent management changes and have stayed shut for extended lengths of time. One food hall gave way to a major South Indian restaurant chain that runs successful franchises around the world including two in London but failed to survive in the road. The site was taken over by a group of local Pakistani businessmen who planned to convert it to a general purpose curry house and takeaway but those plans have stalled. I hear that a mosque is being planned in the site but the premises are run down, boarded-up, and vandalised.

The mutable culinary atmosphere reflects people's changing attitudes to food, both eating out and in. The pie shops and chippies that fed the factory workers have long gone. A couple of pubs are still standing but serve mostly curry and indifferent beer. The pre-war generation had few opportunities to eat out on the road. Ken's approach to food was always basic and matter-of-fact. He had a functional relationship with food, often forgetting to eat when he was otherwise preoccupied with work or books. Starchy white bread, pallid margarine, the occasional tin of processed ham, and baked beans were more

than enough for him. His love of fish and chips were less a nod to childhood memories of the seaside and more an appreciation of the salty tanginess of vinegary hit. Cabbage boiled to a mush was his preferred vegetable and until his fingers seized up in arthritic pain in old age, he occasionally indulged in an orange but his greater pleasure was in using orange segments to illustrate simple mathematical concepts and fractions. He did not see his spartan food tastes as asceticism or self-denial. Food was simply an appreciation of a life filled with work, learning, and filled with good fortune. I often shopped for him and encouraged him to try out different fruits and vegetables. He was appreciative but it did not make a difference to him one way or another.

Joe and Jane, Anne and Brian, Violet and Mick and their friends on the other hand find enjoyment in food, more eating out than in. The 'girls' describe their experiences of cakes and tea in the tearooms while the men bemoan that bar snacks and pork scratchings are not how they remember it. The little shops and a single truck that sold pies, bacon batches, and steaming mugs of tea outside Belgrave's factory gates as shifts started and finished, have all gone. The pubs don't serve old fashioned food any more, just non-descript curry. Even the beer does not taste good they say.

For this generation, practices in home eating were and are still largely shaped by processed industrial food and frugality. Cheap white bread, margarine, cold meats, liver, cheap cuts of meat, and offal all feature prominently on their everyday tables. I have been invited into their homes for meals and often argue with them about the lack of fruit and veg in their diet especially the men. Their palates are not accustomed to spicy food and they prefer not to experiment.

They are quite thrifty with what they have, often buying misshapen fruit and veg because they are cheap and pickling old veg for winter storage. Jane, Anne, and I go 'scrumping' during our memory walks, picking up fruit from the hedges and returning where they show me how to clean and cook them. The women love baking and often have social get-togethers for fundraising where they display their relishes, cakes, and piccalillis but not as often as they like to. They still like to scour shops for bargains where they can, preferring bulk buying of tinned and packed food that they can store and often hoard in their kitchens, garages, garden sheds, and other makeshift storage spaces in their secluded bungalows. It is a habit acquired in the days of weekly wages, limited purchasing choices, and small shops, and although they embraced the arrival of the big supermarkets wholeheartedly, old habits have died hard and the opportunity of a good bargain is too good to resist. Supermarkets opened up a whole new world of culinary adventures for them. They were a great class leveller and suddenly foods from around the world were within their financial and social reach. Supermarket shopping has broadened their taste and choices but they are still not very adventurous when it comes to home eating.

Eating out though is a pleasure and style statement. Their tastes were refined during the 1970s pinnacle of culinary adventures and those signature dishes are still ordered on special occasions. They symbolise aspiration and luxury to this generation who are slightly bemused at the retro-fashion revival of these foods. For Mick, Brian, Joe, and others, chasing pub vouchers and 2-for-1 bargains online is a more pleasurable pursuit, the reward more in the hunt than the actual food. Weekly pub lunch sessions last 3-4 hours, events for which they dress up in their immaculately pressed and creased trousers, shirts, and

cardigan vests, accessorised with ties, tie pins, cufflinks, and shoes shone to a mirror. Mick and Brian can sometimes be difficult customers, often sending back their food if their beef is underdone or egg not runny enough or chips not crisp. They complain about fancy pint glasses and have heated discussions about how bubbles don't look quite right in their beer.

Friday evenings with the lads at the pub is still sacrosanct, a weekly ritual performed, ill health or bad weather notwithstanding. They bemoan the loss of their old working men's clubs and pubs in Belgrave. Their eating out highlight is on beach holidays and cruise travels which exemplify all things luxury in cuisine especially the 70s-specific menus. They still stick to familiar foods while on holidays and rarely explore local foods but fortunately overseas resorts are well equipped to cater to insular Western tastes. Food is the highlight of their cruise travels and they return home with tales of groaning buffets laden with 70s culinary delights, detailed descriptions of foods, impeccable service, and delightful atmospheres complete with feasting, fineries, and dancing.

For the Caribbean and Portuguese communities though food was a communal affair to be shared with friends and family, the enjoyment in the process of creating and sharing food. Many did not find the need to eat out as all the culinary adventures took place at home. Going out to a restaurant to eat was not a commonly done thing. Belgrave and Melton roads had one or two Portuguese restaurants but there were no Caribbean ones here. The Caribbean community instead had great big cookouts in the back of their terraced homes much to the disapproval of neighbours who complained about the noise and spicy aromas. Steaming cauldrons of lamb curries cooked alongside mounds of

rice and beans. Sherlyn used to tell me that English lamb did not have the flavour of Jamaican goat, and English chickens were bland, watery, and flavourless. There were few shops that sold native spices and condiments. Trips to London and farther home were used to stock up on delicacies including fresh fruit not found in 1950s-60s Britain. Although the men cooked, traditional gender roles still prevailed in the kitchen. Women ruled the hearth, some attaining near-mythical reputations for their culinary expertise. Recipes were treated like heirlooms, handed down over generations. Scribbles on the margins of cookbooks were pored over for hidden secrets that would make food taste just like grandma made it.

Sherlyn's Christmas cake recipe on yellowing paper was like peeling back layers in time. In her few lucid and loquacious moments, Sherlyn often described to me in great detail, the Sunday morning feasts she cooked for her extended family after they returned from church. Tables would be laden with roiling vats of goat curry, fried fish, fried plantains, steaming mounds of rice, and lots of cakes. After the exertions of cooking such a meal, Sherlyn would often feel sated and strangely content with making herself a cup of strong tea as she sat at the table watching her children and grandchildren gorge. Portuguese tables were equally laden affairs groaning with food, copious amounts of wine, and noisy, heated arguments on the comparative merits of different Mediterranean olive oils.

In comparison, meals were quieter occasions for the early migrants from the sub-continent. Men arrived without wives or family members and learned to cook for themselves with meagre available rations, a difficult task given the lack

of native ingredients and spices, and the challenges of vegetarianism in the 1950s. Few shops were to be found in Leicester selling ethnic foods, none in Belgrave. Cooking meals that kept them warm through cold winters was a greater struggle. Men here often tell me about surviving on meals of *rotis* made from bread flour, rice, spiced baked beans, and steamed cabbage. They would trek to the city and farther off to Birmingham and even London to buy essentials. When families arrived and settled, the women proved more resourceful in knocking up home meals with available rations and recreating home tastes. By the time the settlers from Africa arrived, during the 1970s, there were a few more shops selling ethnic foods and things were not so difficult.

These settlers from the sub-continent rarely if ever eat out, even in Belgrave Road's eateries. A lifetime of thrift, frugality, and self-denial is hard to give up and it would never occur to them to spend money on eating out. Many of these people are now in the 70s and 80s, returning to single life after the death of their spouses. Feeding themselves is even harder now. Their lifeline is the Belgrave Community Centre. They congregate here every day, men and women alike, coming here on foot, by bus, and even on the council's assisted transport. Looking forward to lunch time is a daily highlight for them. The men amuse themselves playing cards while the women play board games, pray, sing, or just sit quietly.

Meals are cooked fresh on site by a couple of elderly cooks and each person pays approximately £3.50 everyday towards the meal, the only one of the day. The meal is frugal, vegetarian, often consisting of no more than rice, lentils, and

vegetables. Food is assembled in big vats and placed at one end of the big hall on wooden benches. Come lunch time, the elders slowly make their way to the dining hall. One of their members, usually the men, volunteer to organise the token systems as food is served and people sit down to eat. Lunch is a serious, solemn affair, often undertaken in near-silence. There is not much chatter or raucous laughter. The men and women walk up to the food, are served, walk back to their seats on the benches, and eat in silence. It is both respectful and strangely moving. The communal lunch is an event that is anticipated every day for hours. For most people who eat at the community centre, lunch is often the only meal of the day. T, an elderly lady in her 80s, tells me that she sometimes has a banana or a biscuit for her evening meal. On weekends especially Sundays when no lunch is served, many do not eat at all.

The weekday communal lunch nourishes, provides physical and emotional sustenance, while also creating the illusion of companionship, family, and belonging. It appears to both underline and alleviate the loneliness of ageing among men and women, healing the indignity of men having to fend for themselves in old age, and creating a purpose for the women to eat, now that they have no one to cook for and feed. For this generation, eating as a practice has almost come full circle, from cooking and eating on one's own to sharing with family at home, to now returning to eating alone in an impersonal communal space. It still largely remains a functional act designed to nourish the body just as ageing and loneliness rob it of some purpose and meaning.

Yet this generation is not given to mawkishness and sentimentality. They eat as they live, with dignity, gratitude, and appreciation for each day as it comes.

These observations of food, its many practical manifestations in Belgrave and people's lives, have been fascinating. In Belgrave food and food related businesses and enterprises have had an important role in shaping people's lives and livelihoods. For those that settled here during the 1970s, food related enterprises on Belgrave and Melton Roads have turned into successful business opportunities.

Opening and running certain types of eateries is closely related to property ownership but there have been as many instances of success as there have been of failure. Many closed down and takeaway curry houses have been pointed out to me in glee as an example of why only vegetarian eateries will succeed in the area where ironically many of these struggle to survive. Other types of eating establishments have come and gone. The chippies and pie shops have disappeared while the pubs have either closed or are struggling. Even without the presence of high-street food chains, new types of eating establishments are emerging as they bring along and reflect cultural and demographic changes in the place. The independent butcher and greengrocer have disappeared. Flourishing ethnic food shops have arrived in their place and some have survived.

A few Asian grocery stores still remain on Belgrave and Melton Roads stocking a vast array of ethnic foods, spices, and condiments but a comparatively poorer selection of fresh fruit and veg and certainly not the mounds of mangos or exotic tropical fruit of AP's vivid imagination. I do not see the same vibrant ethnic resonance in these roads as I have seen elsewhere in many other parts

of Britain. The food stores look tired but are still busy because this is where most local people still shop for their daily food ingredients. I myself have often purchased fresh spices, teas, and herbal medicines hard to obtain where I live. A Sainsbury's supermarket has thrived and disappeared, its adjacent site taken up by a discount store stocking amongst others varieties of tinned food for bulk buy. Further down the road, an old industrial site has been taken over by a sprawling Islamic supermarket specialising in wholesale foods and related equipment. All these food establishments, be they shops, eateries, restaurants, grocery stores, or marts have all had a part to play in shaping people's food related practices.

The more meaningful and resonant experiences however have been observing people at close quarters through eating and associated practices. During the course of this study, I have often eaten alone and in company. I have drawn strange looks eating on my own at the various eateries that dot Belgrave and Melton Roads sometimes for pleasure, sometimes for sating hunger, for using restroom facilities, for collecting data, for observing others, and for situating myself in place atmosphere. I have been invited to partake in many tables from frugal to feasts.

As a participant and observer, these practices have been little doorways for me to step through time, enabling me to peek at glimpses of food and its manifestations through Belgrave and the role they have played in people's lives. Far from being a grand gastronomic experience it has been more like looking at snapshots of people's lives, one plateful at a time. I have often accompanied matriarchs on their daily food shopping routines in Belgrave. In an area still

heavily populated by ethnic communities past and present, organising daily meals still remains very much a female-dominated role despite men possessing good culinary skills.

Watching the matriarchs at their fearsome best shopping for fresh veg and meat from the local halal butchers daily is like watching a gifted surefooted thespian at work. The women deploy their razor-sharp negotiating skills in ensuring they buy the best value for money although some confess to missing the rapier cut and thrust of bargaining. Observing them in their own kitchens whipping up food is like watching an effortlessly aesthetic performance. The dexterity and fluency of using knives, rolling pins, and utensils, the precision and artistry of flinging spices and condiments together in a sensory feast, and the magic of food created and presented on a table to be generously shared is a marvel, often under-appreciated and taken for granted.

These women are like maestros conducting the most beautiful symphonies, refreshing their memories and melodies in the kitchen. TBP is a wizened old lady in her 90s renowned for her cooking skills. She schools youngsters in the art of cooking, dishing out informal advice on how to cook and keep a family happy. Her culinary reputation is legendary and she is often in demand, invited into homes to cook meals and share her tips. She travels around carrying her trusted *belan* and *bonti*, a rolling pin and a sickle shaped knife mounted on a wooden board respectively, which are almost as old as her, everywhere she goes and insists on using only them for all her cooking.

I have sat in many shops in Belgrave chatting to the owners even as youngsters of the family bring piping hot boxes of freshly cooked food during

lunchtime. K and his son J are busy at work at their family owned photo studio business when J's youngest daughter, K's granddaughter, walks in with a multi-storeyed stainless steel food carrier tightly packed with freshly cooked lunch, the aromas from which make me faint with hunger, and which I am generously invited to share in, an invitation I regretfully refuse.

MH, an elderly Bangladeshi lady in her 70s is bent over double in her home, peering and stirring a huge vat of rice gruel flavoured with meat bones which will be distributed in the local mosque after the day's Ramadan fasting ends. GH and his friends invite me to watch them cook a slap up meal in their makeshift rooms above shops in Melton Roads, barely habitable, leaky, vermin-infested rooms but home nevertheless to a bunch of people on overstayed student visas, now eking out a living driving unlicensed cabs by day and working in takeaways by night. They take turns cooking meals in their evening, simple lamb curries mopped up with shop-bought pitta breads, sharing their enthusiastic food adventures despite their obvious discomfort in having a strange woman as guest. A chance encounter and a casual conversation at a local hotel reception gets me invited to a traditional Somali Islamic wedding feast over which colourful tales of honeymoon adventures and harrowing ones of conflict, war, and refugee life are shared with the same passion.

I have sat in kitchens watching women combine culinary skills with entrepreneurial flair as they make relishes and chutneys for sale, negotiate orders for snacks, hire themselves out as freelance caterers and cooks, and even do takeout meals for busy professionals, all the while ensuring their

families are fed on time. I have sat in many sitting rooms, religious music blaring from an old cassette in the background as I observe elderly ladies, their sarees hitched up thigh-high, folding wafer-thin pastries into samosas with lightning speed, cracking bawdy jokes with the same deftness as they total up a 5000-samosa order and calculate prices in their heads.

The salty, savoury hit of greasy junk food sold in local kebab and pizza shops is a magnet for hungry teens breaking for lunch from the local Abbey College as it is a taste of rebellion and forbidden pleasure for some escaping the strict vegetarian traditions of home cooking. Taste is an unnecessary distraction for Kenneth though, not something actively eschewed but an asceticism acquired over time. Kenneth is content eating baked beans straight from a tin, some nondescript meat, and an occasional slice of plain white bread as he occupies himself with the mental pleasures of Sudoku. He does miss fish and chips as there isn't one close to where he lives.

When I visited him I often made it a point to buy some for him along with some food essentials. For Kenneth, food is merely instrumental, a means to live a life dedicated to intellectual rather than gustatory pleasures. For many though food is a social and familial enjoyment, a practice that goes hand in hand with the companionship of loved ones, sometimes family, sometimes friends. The Caribbean and Portuguese communities saw food and eating as an extension of family life while for Joe, Brian, Mick, and others, it is about friendship and companionship. Homemade wine and yellowing pieces of paper with Christmas cake recipes are as treasured mementoes as photos of food buffets on cruise liners and beach holidays. Bulk buy bargains of tinned duck and pressed

sausage meat are as much a prize as lottery winnings blown up on chocolate cake and 2-for-1 offers on gammon, chips, and eggs.

The pubs, shops, stores, restaurants, eateries, homes, streets, and community centres in Belgrave have all nurtured and fostered multiple practices around food. Food and eating practices are functional and emotional, instrumental and incidental, filled with joy and tinged with sadness, endured alone or shared in loved company. Eating practices determine and shape livelihoods, make lives purposeful or drudgery, protect, sustain, and sometime subvert socio-cultural identities and norms, enrich and enfeeble everyday life. They map who people are, where they come from, and what happens to them along the way.

BEING, BECOMING, BELONGING

Everyday life in Belgrave is like anywhere else, filled with the mundane minutiae of people's daily living. It informs habitual practices, often routinized ways of eating, sleeping, working, shopping, managing present, planning future, and marking life's highlights through celebrations and grief. These everyday practices are navigated through multiple institutional and structural affiliations, socio-cultural norms and boundaries, spoken and unspoken rules, written and unwritten codes of conduct, complex networks, and constellations. Practices manifest through lives that gather memories, moments, knowledge, skill, potential, artefacts, aptitudes, and attitudes, and those lives underpin and shape a sense of self as a continual work in progress.

Through these continual negotiations and navigations, Belgrave threads through as a place in multiple manifestations, through structures, sites, territorial boundaries, coordinates, streetscapes, built and unstructured environments, and landscapes. The place is and becomes the atmosphere. It is held together as a fabric of wefts and warps, woven and held together in place by sutures both temporary and permanent. Through deft manipulation of its threads, people find ways to bind and unravel, embellish and disfigure, enrich and denude lives and selves, in everyday practices.

Micro-level practices often reflect and are influenced by meso- and macro-level changes in socio-economic and cultural histories. In negotiating change through embrace or resistance, and in their enactment of practice, passions are developed and abandoned, affiliations formed and dissolved, connections made

and broken. Institutional structures are accepted or rejected, and socio-cultural norms adhered to, broken, or modified. People connect to and disconnect from Belgrave in multiple ways. They actively seek ownership, chose to distance themselves, or are excluded from place atmosphere. Thus are shaped everyday practices of being, becoming, and belonging.

Being and becoming is often a process of belonging to someone or something bigger than their own. One of the means by which this process is enacted is through making and sustaining connections, often within the auspices of institutional structures. An institution such as marriage and family life provides people the means to be and belong. Belgrave's main structures, sites, side streets, and buildings personify this institution in its various manifestations. Belgrave's factories for instance were sites where most people met and formed connections. Factories, dance halls, pubs, picture houses, and tea rooms were all sites of romance, love, friendship, and companionship. People met, romanced, 'courted', found love and one another amidst these spaces. Dance halls and picture houses aided romance. Tea rooms witnessed shared confidences between women as did pubs to a lesser extent amongst the men. The famous CoE churches on Belgrave and Melton Roads witnessed romantic unions where people began shared journeys.

From Mick and Brian's stories I glimpse how the men walked the ladies to the pictures, strove to obtain balcony seats for the best views, buy sweets and soft drinks off the usherettes, and romanced them. Shop floors were exchanged for dance floors during the weekend. The week's hard labour, grime, sweat, and dirt was shed behind. Men slipped into neatly pressed shirts, shiny suits, and

ties, pomaded and combed their hair carefully, used up their best Boots aftershave saved like a prize possession. The women no doubt doubly intensified their efforts with pretty frocks and newly set hair to go dancing over the weekends. They still dress like that for their weekly pub meals out, the men in immaculate suits, ties, and cardigan vests, the women in skirts and dresses with tights.

There was little practice of co-habiting before marriage I am told. The ladies lived with their parents while some boarded at a local working women's hostel. Men shared lodgings. Engagement periods were not lengthy unless fiancés were serving in the Army. Weddings were lively but frugal affairs. Wedding dresses were bought cheaply, embellished with handmade decorations and accessories, some even made with fabric from the local draper and hand sewn on trusty Singer machines. Wedding rituals commenced at the local CoE churches and festivities finished at the local pub with plenty of drinks and dancing. Honeymoons were ventures no further than nearby seaside resorts, often trains from local Belgrave station to Skegness and Mablethorpe.

Where weddings were lively affairs, marriages and marital roles were taken seriously. Almost everyone I have met during the course of this study – Jane and Joe, Anne and Brian, Violet and Mick, and many others – have all celebrated their golden wedding anniversaries and beyond. Their marriages have endured hardship, separations, loss of children, illness, bereavement, and many of life's vicissitudes. I sometimes watch them in the pub bicker and argue and wonder how they have managed. Then I catch a glimpse of something, a shared joke, a simple gesture that makes me understand. I find it oddly touching

and romantic to see Anne and Brian now in their 80s walking hand in hand to the shops like they have done for over 55 years of Saturdays. I feel a lump in my throat when I see George, now living on his own in the home he shared with his beloved German wife Klara for nearly 60 years until she passed away on Christmas Day four years ago, refusing to go away on any more coach tours or cruises or anywhere overnight, lest he be parted from Klara's ashes now resting in a delicate porcelain jar on the sitting room mantelpiece.

Belonging to one another as married couples also came with its set of responsibilities, of being husband and wife, and coming into marital roles. Traditional gender roles still prevailed although many women worked a full week and in many cases were better schooled and read than their husbands. Men were providers, women were homemakers. The newlyweds moved quickly into rental lodgings on Melton and started saving for a property in earnest. The men picked up extra shifts at the factories and took on Saturday jobs for cash. Women scrimped, saved, and budgeted where they could to put away money each month towards a deposit.

Their first home purchases were modest houses off Belgrave and Melton Roads and many lived there before moving away to the suburbs. Retired for long, gender roles and divisions still prevail. Men are still handy with DIY, pottering around, fixing things, while the bulk of cooking and cleaning is still done by women. They balance becoming married couples and belonging to one another by being themselves. Men and women give each other ample space. They protect and sustain their own interests, friendships, hobbies, and spaces, nurtured through gardens and garage sheds.

Belongingness is also sustained through friendships and companionships going back many decades. It transcends marital status. Being a married couple is a collective badge of identity but their group of friends also includes the widowed, the bereaved, and the never-married.

Barbara is nearly 70, single, never married, retired early from a textile factory to care for her elderly father. She is a lively participant in weekly pub meals, coach tours, and shopping excursions. These are friendships forged in Belgrave's factories and cramped neighbourhoods, sustained in pubs, tearooms, clubs, picture houses, and walks in the Abbey Park. These friendships have endured through moves away from Belgrave into the suburbs, through coach holidays and cruises, weekly pub lunches, Friday evenings at the club for the men, and regular walks in the park for the women. Friendships, making time and space for them is sacrosanct. They have occasional get-togethers. At their age, birthdays and wedding anniversaries, especially landmark ones, are celebrated with fun, joy, and much merriment.

Parties and get-togethers are lively affairs, replete with sandwiches, sausage rolls, quiches, and pork pies bulk purchased from Costco, all washed down with copious amounts of wine, cider, and beer. They resonate with the sound of laughter, banter, and after one too many drinks, a few raunchy jokes as well. Special occasions are a way of reaffirming their belongingness and also gathering together extended families. Now pensioners living in bungalow-lined suburbia, these friendships extend into neighbourly communities and are sustained by good neighbourly practices of looking out for one another. When

someone loses a spouse, the practicalities of food, laundry, and medicines are taken care of. Older neighbours are looked after, taken out for a pub meal or weekly shop, prescriptions picked up, accompanied to hospital. Many are neighbourhood watch members, taking on an active role in maintaining a clean, presentable, and safe neighbourhoods, volunteering for night patrols and communal clean-ups, reporting fly tipping or civic hazards, and working in community support. Beyond immediate families, for this happy bunch, a sense of being stems from becoming and remaining good, caring, supportive, spouses, friends, neighbours, and citizens.

Evolving into citizenship roles is harder by comparison for migrants who have to deal with their own sense of insecurity and alienation in a new country. In those circumstances the institutions of marriage and family anchors a stronger if a slightly more limiting sense of being and belonging. For the Caribbean, Portuguese, and South Asian migrants who arrived in Belgrave during the 1950s, building and sustaining strong family lives was the single most important way in which a sense of belonging could be constructed. Many Caribbean and Portuguese migrants were already married when they arrived in Belgrave and settled with their families in and around Belgrave Road.

As terraced housing expanded along the side streets, many stayed on, finding work in factories, hospital, and locally elsewhere, opened up businesses, raised families, and formed tight-knit but fairly insular communities. Women in the Caribbean community worked in greater numbers compared to their Portuguese counterparts who were predominantly homemakers. Rudi's grandmother Michelle was the matriarch of one of the biggest Portuguese families in Belgrave, raising seven sons and daughters

including Rudi's father, but she also helped out in the family restaurant kitchen. Sherlyn by contrast worked in healthcare till retirement. She was widowed young but never remarried, preferring instead to raise her children and grandchildren with the support of a big network of aunts, uncles, and relatives. These communities grew and were shaped around the local shops, streets, terraced homes, factories, tearooms, but most importantly the churches. Their sense of belonging was shaped by familiarity within community with not much inter-community social interaction.

For the South Asian migrants who arrived in Belgrave during the 1950s finding their sense of belonging in a new country was much harder. Many of these arrivals were young men, some barely out of their teens. Some were married, some had babies on the way, but almost all of them initially had to leave their families behind to arrive here as economic migrants. Without the stability of family life, relationships had to be sustained across distant connections and dispersed communications. Their sense of being were shaped by the singular purpose of the need to work, earn, save, and send home money, sometimes under extremely harsh conditions. Until they could save enough to bring their families over, their belongingness amongst each other was crafted within Belgrave's factories, makeshift lodgings, and shops. They became one another's family, a loose collective brought together by shared hardships of work, weather, and wellbeing.

That kinship is still evident amongst this group of settlers, stronger in male camaraderie, evident through everyday practices of playing cards or sharing a communal lunch in the community centre, walking in the park, or simply sitting

and chatting in the bus stop or roadside benches.

By comparison migrants who arrived during the 1960s and 1970s had the advantages and stabilising factors of family life when they fled Africa to arrive in Britain. Their sense of being and belonging, their notions of identity and homeland, was suddenly uprooted in political conflict but their families provided them with the anchoring safety net in a new country. For a community that deliberately chose not to settle in India, the heritage and cultural identity of being Indian provided a security blanket, a new adaptive cultural label, and plenty of business opportunities. The supposed ethnoscape and cultural identity of Belgrave and Melton Roads is a creation of this community, in everyday practices of trading, shopping, eating, and seasonal celebrations. In losing an old sense of being and crafting a new one in a new country, an adapted, albeit a more conservative approach to cultural identity and heritage provided these migrants with a sense of belonging. Marriage, family life, and the practices of weddings are key pillars that hold together this conservative community's cultural moorings in Belgrave.

CL runs the Belgrave Road branch of a wedding planning business, the other branch being located in London where its owners live. The business is a one-stop shop offering a range of wedding services from venue, backdrop, decorations, to transport and catering. Having worked in a mortgage consultancy before this job, CL finds that wedding planning is an even tougher test of her negotiating and persuasion skills. From her vantage point she finds conservative cultural values still widely prevalent among her predominantly ethnic Asian customers. Arranged marriages are still the norm and marriage

alliances are more pragmatic business connections than love matches. Institutions of marriage and family life function as a conduit through which community connects as stakeholder alliances, mergers negotiated and cemented. Many families belong to a close-knit network of connections and bonds forged through shared circumstances experienced in Belgrave, early settlements, shops, businesses, and property ownership. Many of these families have moved away but their common bonds endure, further perpetuated through marriage alliances within their network sought and made. Even the younger generations seem quite pragmatic, trusting their parents to seek suitable matches for them.

Of course with time, values and norms have become more progressive and relaxed. Wedding expenses are no longer just the bride's family's burden to be borne and are often shared between families. The community known for its ostentatious wedding ceremonies, still perceive them to be a social statement and occasion for conspicuous consumption but increasingly wedding budgets are also well spent in property or business investments. The community is very cosmopolitan with a global outlook and extends its increasingly relaxed attitude even to interracial marriages and alliances. Prospective brides and grooms are encouraged to get to know one another, with parental consent of course, and the parents prefer to ignore instances of co-habiting or pre-marital sex. Suitable love matches are approved and parents seek to involve both families in formalising marriages and family life.

These institutional affiliations continue to remain strong even among newer migrants, providing them with a grounding for adapting themselves to life in a new country. Be it Somali and Ethiopian asylum seekers who celebrate

weddings as an affirmation of survival, Filipino nurses who have left behind spouses and children to work in English hospitals and send money home, or young Polish and Lithuanian couples who arrive with ambitions and aspirations, the idea of marriage, family life, and institutional affiliations thread strongly through people's sense of belonging in Belgrave.

Closely connected to the institution of marriage is the idea and expression of organised religion, its manifestations apparent in many places of worship, the magnificent CoE churches on Belgrave and Melton Roads, and more recent ones. For the native inhabitants, Belgrave's churches were sites of affirming love and life in formal bonds and wedding rituals. Beyond that though, they were as secular as the pub, dance hall, and picture house, the former evoking less devotion and attachment than the latter. There appears to be a greater affinity to church going, Sunday school attendance, and choir participation activities from amongst the middle and upper classes in Belgrave compared to the blue-collar, factory working residents.

With growing economic prosperity many of the affluent classes moved out to the suburbs taking their religiosity with them. As Belgrave became more industrialised, there were fewer CoE and more non-denominational churches such as Methodist. At the same time social stigmas around non-attendance at churches faded, an indirectly contributing factor to the decline of CoE churches and the disappearance of their congregations. For many working classes though there was less religiosity and greater secularity in their relationship with the Church. That sense of secular detachment is still apparent among them.

Christmas is a time for feasting and partying, probably holidaying in a warmer destination, but not particularly a religious occasion. Church going is not common anymore except for the occasional carol service.

Organised religion and its spatial manifestations in Belgrave's magnificent churches has been a greater guiding force for later migrants. The Caribbean and Portuguese communities had a strong adherence to the Church, the latter being staunch Catholics, a faith they shared with the later Indian migrants from Goa. For these communities their sense of being Christians and belonging to the faith was a strong factor in shaping their sense of community. They were actively immersed in all social activities connected to the Church from Sunday worship, Sunday school, and Bible classes to church fetes, group singing, and religious entertainment. Their social and religious interactions were characterised by the same joyousness and merriment as that brought to the pubs and dance halls by native English.

Religion shaped not only a sense of collective belonging but also a personal oneness of being. Sherlyn was guided in almost all of her daily decisions by the Bible, sometimes from randomly picked pages. She often anthropomorphised Jesus in her chats. It was not uncommon to see her sitting or sometimes even falling asleep in her chair clutching a photo of Jesus Christ in her hands. She spoke to Him every day, held conversations with Him, sought His advice, and spoke of her desire to be one with Him. I often wonder if she did.

The South Asian migrants lacked that anchor when they arrived and settled in Belgrave. Unlike their Goan compatriots who arrived a few years later and

immediately formed a kinship with the local Portuguese community owing to common cultural and religious roots, the predominantly Hindu migrants often felt adrift, a feeling exacerbated by the absence of family and suitable places of worship. Their sense of belonging was confined to photos of family and pictures of Hindu deities in their luggage as a symbol of protection and talisman of good luck. The pictures eventually formed the basis of crafting makeshift prayer spaces within their poky lodgings. The deities would be adorned with wild flowers picked from hedges. Days would start and finish with prayers. Weekly wage envelopes would be placed at their feet for blessings, a practice still prevalent in social gatherings in the Belgrave Community Centre.

The women now all in their 70s and 80s seem more religious than the men and spend most of their days praying and singing religious songs while waiting for communal lunch to be served. Their makeshift shrines are little more than elevated tables covered in brightly coloured table cloths, lined with glass-framed pictures of Hindu deities, adorned with turmeric and vermillion, garlanded sometimes with scented marigolds but often with plastic strands, fragranced with incense sticks, and lit with oil lamps. They pray, sing, and chant to the accompaniment of religious music playing from an old cassette recorder, reconstructing traditional rituals of worship and prayer in adaptive surroundings to anchor their sense of physical and spiritual being and belongingness.

It was not until the new wave of settlers arrived here from Africa during the 1970s that tangible Hindu places of worship appeared. At least two temples now flourish in Belgrave, repurposed out of an old factory and warehouse, both started with donations from senior members of the community in the name of

their ancestors. The sites throng with worshippers, especially on weekends where families gather to pray, chant, sing occasionally perform the *dandiya* dance, and place wish fulfilment requests on little folded-up pieces of paper. On the walls of the cavernous warehouse are displayed tall portraits of Hindu gods next to plaques memorialising donor names. Pictures of deities are adorned more ostentatiously than they are in the community centre. The air is fragrant with scented jasmine and incense sticks, resonant with the sound of prayer hymns. Professional music troupes perform devotional songs on stage to the accompaniment of traditional percussion instruments. Families gather to connect with friends and family old and new, living and dead, offer prayers, conduct ceremonial birth and death rituals, seek blessings, and wish for success in relationships, jobs, health, and property. Prayers ground and reinforce their sense of personal and collective being, connects them to ancestry, lineage, and wider community.

As it was for other communities in other moments in time, these places of worship also function as social spaces, facilitating social interaction as well as religious communion. Just as the native English solemnised their wedding rituals in churches and the Caribbean and Portuguese communities organised social and community events in churches, these temples too are used to negotiate social and family alliances. Families gather here to meet, greet, and negotiate new matches and alliances, to scout potential mates for their children. If marriage negotiations between two families are already under way, religious gatherings and occasions become opportunities for the engaged and about-to-be-affianced to 'get to know one another' under chaperone. Temples are safe spaces, parental-approved, non-judgmental environments where youngsters

can meet, date in secret, prospect potential matches, exchange phone numbers and social media profiles, and experiment with normal youth and teen life like many of their non-ethnic friends without the overt cultural restrictions.

Through Belgrave's sites, spaces, and moments in time, socio-cultural norms around institutions like marriage and organised religion change according to prevalent mores. Few of these norms are codified or enshrined. They are excogitated organically, internalised by most, and adhered to out of familial or self-imposed, self-selecting choices. Through their homological observance, these norms underpin and strengthen institutional structures, helping them survive, succeed, and perpetuate community ties, networks, relationships, and identities. In their collective enactment and orchestration as prayers or wedding rituals, they act as unspoken yet articulated boundaries regulating states of being and belonging.

Many of these boundaries cut across stereotypes of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and social class. Most remain within these boundaries often instinctively and unthinkingly in return for the luxury of secure identities and states of belonging. For some others these identities are only temporary wardrobes, to be worn and shed as convenient. Some boundaries are transgressed while some others are resented, abandoned, relaxed, or subverted. Those who do not fit in neatly remain on the margins or peripheries of belonging.

The native English all categorise themselves as proud working people but never label using class terms. They remain comfortable within their collective sense of belonging, having married, made friends, and remained neighbours amongst

their own circle. Friendships with people they considered external to their boundaries were not maintained or sustained. They were not deliberately neglected but rather withered away from lack of nourishment. Accidental reunions across class boundaries such as that between Violet and Linda aboard a cruise ship were awkwardly negotiated and hurriedly avoided.

Belgrave was strongly formative in forging their roots and collective class identities enshrined in day to day practices of eating, drinking, work, and leisure. When the spatial contours of Belgrave began to change with the arrival of new migrants and rapid changes in accompanying demographic makeup, it displaced their sense of belonging, causing them to move away to suburban confines. The practices they developed in Belgrave carry on, some unchanging, many modified. These people however do feel increasingly displaced by a changing world, a society and nation they no longer recognise and one which feels increasingly alienating to them. The pub is their sanctuary where they can think and speak their minds without the opprobrium of political correctness.

Early Caribbean and South Asian communities often speak of racism, alienation, and abuse during their early days here. Communities were insular and people seemingly unfriendly. There was very little social interaction across racial divides, and friendships much less relationships were frowned upon. NC runs a newsagents at the corner of Belgrave and Melton Roads, a business started by his grandparents. He started helping in the shop as a child and has vivid memories of racist abuse, violence, and a great big hockey stick his grandfather brandished to drive away trouble makers from his shop. The

Caribbean communities mostly married from amongst their own. Sherlyn's sister, Jasmin's grand aunt was one exception, having married a white English hospital co-worker but choosing to move away to Birmingham to raise her family where she still lives.

The Indian migrants both from the subcontinent and from Africa maintain their conservative approach to remaining within self-defined cultural boundaries. Based on incomes, savings, educational attainments, and wealth acquisition, they could be safely classified as middle to upper middle class. They prefer to maintain cultural homogeneity through adherence to traditional religious beliefs, arranged marriages, and conservative approaches to love and modern relationships. Norms around love matches are subject to negotiation and while open instances of co-habitation are rare, pre-marital sex is frowned upon but ignored where possible. Parents prefer not to know but attempt to legitimise love matches by arranging weddings.

Matches across racial and religious boundaries are trickier. CL suggests that amongst the people who walk through her office doors, she finds a far greater tolerance and acceptance for interracial and interreligious matches involving white, English / European, Christian partners than any other. Preferences are also for educated, financially well-off professionals rather than '*artist types*' with unstable career pathways, prospects, or financial histories.

Arranged marriages though are not always happy ones. DP's arranged marriage broke down when she discovered her husband's lengthy history of medical and sexual complications which were hidden from her by both families,

her subsequent divorce causing deep rifts on both sides. She has developed an active sense of loathing for and alienation from all that was familiar to her while her family disapproves of her joining an online dating website. SP is an attractive young woman whose family is struggling to find a suitable match for. She walks with a slight limp, a result of childhood illness and her family does not have an enlightened attitude to disability. Daily she negotiates a difficult road of acceptance and alienation, balancing family disapproval and her own sense of self-worth.

GH is a young British Asian man in his 20s who has struggled to come to terms with his homosexuality and cultural-familial expectations. I met him nearly four years ago and spoke to him at length about his experiences of growing up in Belgrave within a conservative community where everyone knew everyone else's business. Going to university in London and subsequently finding a job there changed him and his life for the better. He successfully managed to fend off family attempts at an arranged marriage, one that involved being deliberately dishonest about his sexual orientation to the bride's family. He has now openly acknowledged his orientation, is in a happy relationship, and has started a support group in the Peepul Community Centre to discuss issues around homosexuality within the Asian community. The Peepul Centre is a modern building mostly used for gym and fitness classes, networking, festival celebrations, and business networking by the local community. His initial attempts were not received well. His parents barely spoke to him. GH however has now come into his own as a man and the growing number of people who drop into his support sessions indicates that he is happy and comfortable with who he is and has become.

States of being play out across not just institutional ones such as marriage and religion but multiple socio-cultural markers and are shaded by degrees of alienation, displacement, sequestering, and exclusion. Some markers provide a sense of inclusion while causing disquiet and occlusion simultaneously. Food for instance can be just as much a binding as an ostracising factor. The guilty pleasures of meat offered in Belgrave' kebab shops are a forbidden taste for rebellious youngsters brought up in conservative vegetarian households. Kebab shops and curry houses though are frowned upon by owners of vegetarian restaurants in Belgrave who resent the introduction of non-vegetarian menus in erstwhile vegetarian eateries. Although vegetarian restaurants are struggling and some have had to revamp their menu to attract meat-eating customers, these shops and new menus are seen as a betrayal of the road's identity by its self-appointed cultural custodians.

Food is divisive, reinforced by barriers of smell. South Asian migrants recall how their white neighbours used to object to smells of cooking spices when now they themselves find the strong meaty smells emanating from kitchens of their Muslim neighbours equally off putting. AB, now a successful cardiologist in the US, feels vindicated at the idea of vegetarianism becoming fashionable and aspirational while he and his siblings struggled to be fed vegetarian meals at school during the 1970s.

Everyday manners, courtesy, language, dress codes can be alienating or inclusive. Lorene, Jasmin's aunt talks about the awkwardness of displaying overtly English mannerisms and expressions learned from a colonial education

as a new migrant in England. As a youngster newly arrived in Belgrave, she often walked into local surgeries or libraries dressed in a pretty frock, hat, and gloves. She drew awkward stares as much for her impeccable outfit as she did for greeting everyone while walking into a room or peppering her expressions with references to God. This was how she was raised and taught to speak in Jamaica. In secular, stiff-upper lip England she came across as awkward and a misfit. AP was also raised as a child to speak the Queen's English in school in Kenya. Her vocabulary was straight out of Enid Blyton full of cripes, crumbs, golly, and alas. She still cringes at memories of being laughed at in school.

Norms of cultural approval sanctify or exclude belonging by protective custodians. K's photography business which he runs along with his son, is always in demand for weddings and social occasions. The best of his work happens in his photo studio on Belgrave Road, where he takes graduation photos of youngsters, an artistic testament of the community's educational aspirations and achievements. Increasingly though he gets requests for modelling portfolio shots. Customers come in with sample photos and demand replication. He turns down the business on both artistic and cultural grounds because he finds the work tasteless and distasteful. The photos seem quite tame to me but it offends his cultural boundaries as he bemoans changing mores among youngsters and worries about his granddaughter.

Conservative values and imposed social norms can alienate some more than others. For every third generation female who is ambitious and career minded, there is another whose aspirations are thwarted by parents who would like to see their daughters married off instead. Some find that their brothers and male

cousins get more opportunities to go out and work while they are restricted to the local college and home. For those on the margins life is even more difficult. HM is female and gay. She would like to visit GH's support group more often and raise issues about being female and gay within a conservative community but feels marginalised and side-lined by the group which is male dominated. She stopped going after one particular incident of vicious verbal abuse which triggered episodes of self-harm.

SP is a retired postmaster whose family ran the local post office till they closed down a few years ago. His youngest daughter suffers from mental health issues, a taboo in a community not already very accepting of disabilities. She remains confined at home hidden like a dark secret. Their pain relegates them to a territory of monachopsis, a world of shadows and darkness that alienates them from themselves and everyone else.

Differences cause self-exclusion and feelings of displacement. A group of Sri Lankan families who have recently moved here from London are contemplating plans for converting the front room of a terraced home into a 'South Indian' Hindu temple. The temples in Belgrave feel alien to them. Those Gods are not the Gods they are used to worshipping. Prayers are in a language they don't understand and the rituals are different, unfamiliar.

A group of local businessmen want to take over an empty premises where a few restaurant ventures have already failed. They worry about whispers of a mosque opening up there and fear for community cohesion. While many of them have leased out commercial premises to pubs and halal butchers and the

like, a mosque is contemplated with trepidation. L is an elderly widow in her 70s whose night time sleep is disturbed by the cries of the Bangladeshi infant next door. The little boy has been circumcised, his pain-filled screams keeping her awake at night and she feels under siege in her own home. Her neighbour wears a full veil and won't talk to her. It doesn't feel like the neighbourhood L has known anymore and she feels trapped and alienated.

Feeling trapped and alienated, literally, is an experience PP can relate to. As a young 18 year old fresh out of college and about to enter university, she was dragged off for a holiday to India by her parents to visit their cultural homeland. Having been brought up at home within the prescriptive norms of Indian culture, it wasn't PP's first choice of a holiday location especially when her friends were going off on exotic beach holidays but she relented as it may be an opportunity to experience culture first hand in its natural habitat. In graphic detail she recounts an incident during that holiday when she was left alone in a car when her parents went off to visit relatives. In a few moments her car was surrounded by screaming hordes of people beating down the car doors and hood, thumping on the bumper, shaking it violently, demanding money from her. The incident terrorised her into having prolonged nightmares and destroyed any residual goodwill she has towards her cultural homeland. She vows never to return.

Her cousin JP though teases her and suggests that he would return to India not on holiday but to work in one of the bigger cities if a suitable job opportunity came up. He feels his British accent and nationality will give him a superior advantage but he won't mix with locals. I ask him why he won't move to Australia where there is a supposed demand for IT experts and he would be

able to secure work without too many hassles on account of his British nationality. He perceives his ethnicity might be a barrier to more equitable treatment in Australia and fears being looked down upon. I am not surprised he fails to see the irony.

Some migrants find different ways of connecting to homelands as touch points and references across distant geographies. The older South Asian migrants compartmentalise ideas of work and home, the former exemplified by Britain, the latter being the sub-continent. Many have invested extensively in property and land in India and go away for extended periods of time during the winter where their pension fetches them an extremely comfortable life. Many wish to go back permanently and even die there but are also pragmatic enough to see the value in investing in India's booming property market.

Making annual trips to India, investing in property, and maintaining a tangible physical presence with their homeland makes them feel connected and gives them a sense of belonging. They maintain close friendships amongst one another cultivated over sixty years ago but beyond that, make no attempt at organising themselves as a community or negotiate for greater influence in local affairs unlike the African Indian migrants who arrived here a couple of decades later. The latter are a trading community, possessed of a degree of socio-economic capital which they have put to good use in organising themselves in Belgrave. In the process they have also managed to appropriate their Indian heritage and culture as a valuable socio-economic resource and have branded themselves as cultural custodians. The former see them as upstarts, resenting them for their seeming success and indeed supposed arrogance, and wanting

no part of social mingling with them. For two migrant communities sharing a common cultural heritage albeit from different parts of the world, curiously there is little or no interaction amongst them, not even animosity, just indifference.

For the earlier wave of migrants from the sub-continent, memories of racism and alienation from the native white population is a very real one but they in turn make little or no effort to mingle with other migrants. Pinto, my Goan friend, retains fond memories of his fellow Portuguese migrants from Portugal with whom he formed a closer bond and felt a greater sense of kinship than he did with his fellow migrants who felt alienated him for his cultural heritage. For the East African Indians, moving away from Belgrave, putting a physical distance, and spatially disconnecting from Belgrave gives them a sense of belonging in a new country, a sense of having arrived.

Many feel more connected to their adaptive home country by having physically moved away from their earliest place of settlement. Even with this group of migrants there are subtle but very real divisions and sense of 'them' and 'us' which is perceptible only to a researcher who understands those sensibilities whereas it may give the impression of being one homogenous Indian cultural community to an objective outsider. Many of these migrants were offered the opportunity to take up African citizenship during the final tumultuous years before their exodus but chose not to do so. Many had retained their old colonial ties in the form of a British passport and chose to make Britain their new home.

Even within this community there are palpable divisions. The Sindhis among them, '*anyone whose name ends with –ani*' as one helpfully tells me are more entrepreneurial than the '*Shahs, Patels*' and so on who tend to be more white collar, educated professionals than the former who gravitate naturally into business. The Sindhis are perceived as being very canny with money but also very crafty in their business practices and are treated with a mix of cautious reserve and grudging respect by other fellow migrants.

These subtle complexities and subterranean undercurrents are carefully negotiated during social occasions or marriage alliances while other forms of interactions are not particularly encouraged and connections are kept carefully separate even within the same geographical area.

Connections and bridges though are not always enacted across geographical distance. Some look behind them at the past. Some look ahead towards the future. AV is a third generation British Indian who rents an old run down factory premises from where he runs dance and music classes on Belgrave Road. He claims to be a trained choreographer who has worked in London's dance studios, theatricals, and a couple of Bollywood film sets. His credentials draw youngsters mostly under the age of 12, and some women, to enrol in classes teaching Bollywood dance, the pinnacle of aspirational glamour for many. He invites me to a musical show choreographed by him held at the Peepul Centre, where youngsters dance to a mishmash set of Western pop music set to Bollywood dance moves. It pays homage to no particular cultural lineage but is a great success for children and parents alike.

The Sri Lankan community have more pragmatic ways of connecting. Many left the troubled island as children during the 1980s, arrived in Britain as refugees, and have never returned. They have raised families and children who have grown up with no sense of homeland or culture. This community travel from all around Leicester and Loughborough to attend Saturday Tamil language classes, held at the Belgrave Community Centre. The classes are all organised and delivered through volunteers. This community is remarkably multilingual with an uncanny ability to pick up languages. Their diaspora network extends all across Europe and many family members are fluent in many European languages.

KL is one of the class organisers. He says this community would like to encourage their children to learn their mother tongue, partly as a way of connecting and belonging but also because language skills are important for future prospects. PLS is a mother of two girls and a boy all under the age of 12 whom she brings over every weekend for classes. She has been informed by the school that her children have excellent language abilities and developing those skills can only be good for future job prospects. A mixture of sentimentality and pragmatism underpins her attempts at inculcating a sense of belonging amongst her children.

As people come and go through Belgrave, as they live, eat, breathe, shop, work, learn, celebrate, grieve, and mourn, they leave behind their imprints on the landscape just as the taphonomic landscape lives on in them. This gentle ebb and flow sometimes is disrupted by external seismic events, occurrences that shake people's inner sense of belonging or alienation by emphasising division and exclusion. While on one of my many trips to the Belgrave

community centre, I am warned by residents not to come for the next couple of days as there is a planned EDL march through Belgrave into the city. The bus driver hands out flyers and warns of disruptions in services. Posters and signs warning of traffic diversions appear everywhere. The police start to arrive, police vehicles are massed at strategic checkpoints. Additional policing resources are requisitioned from adjacent constabularies to bolster Leicestershire police resources.

On the day of the march there is a palpable sense of tension in the air. Shops are shut and there is an eerie quiet on Belgrave and Melton Roads. At the periphery of the city, the police have intercepted EDL activists and 'kettled' them in local pubs. A ragtag bunch of activists have appeared out of nowhere in a loose collective, joined together either by their common sense of opposition to nationalist rabbleroising or a feeling of adventure or fun day out. Either way they march towards the city centre, an assorted bunch of people of all colours, sizes, shapes, and faiths, holding up banners of Unite Against Fascism. There are however banners of all stripes from pro-Palestine slogans to stop the new Heathrow runway. People are now slowly starting to move towards the city's Haymarket centre where barricades have been erected. Police stand watch everywhere, and crowds gather, some curious, some active, many passive onlookers.

A huge barricade separates groups of people divided by a makeshift stage from where an eclectic collection of eardrum-shattering music is interrupted by frenzied speeches from passionate activists. The smell of alcohol and weed is thick in the air. Police horses stand guard next to the stage and a makeshift scaffolding barrier separates either end. After a couple of hours of music and

speeches, the crowd starts to get restive. And then from nowhere the first glass bottles appear, flung over the heights of the barrier by invisible hands. For the next hour or so, there is complete and utter pandemonium as a pitched battle is waged, with bottles and stones being flung, police striving to keep order, tear gas bursts, and much shouting and screaming. The air is thick with smoke, noise, and the excitement of fear and danger. Amidst all that excitement and noisy atmosphere that clouds rational judgement, what stands out are the factional claims and counterclaims of ownership. Shouts and slogans of 'Go Back to Where You Came From' and 'This is Our Home' ring out from either side of the barricades, claims of ownership and belonging, crossed out by shouts of banishment and exclusion from the road, the streets, the city, the place. Emotions run high and shouting noises reach a screaming crescendo. Many onlookers stare on fascinated by the spectacle in a strange mix of fear and curiosity as both groups of thugs wage a pitched battle or street brawl under the guise of ideology.

For those few hours, people's inner fears of alienation and displacement are magnified even as pride and passion in belonging come alive. The street and place becomes symptomatic of people's own self-negotiation of belongingness. The protest and violence thunders on for a while. The bleeding and injured are carted away, the violent ones restrained and massed into police vehicles. Order is restored after a few hours as police disperse the crowds but many return with feelings of belonging unreconciled. Even after the main groups of protesters have been cleared, some return to brawl, not having quite quenched their thirst for violence. The centre resembles a battlefield with broken glass, smouldering embers or ashes, paper, debris, litter everywhere. An exciting afternoon is had by all. The newspapers and the BBC website are full of the story the next day

and I do not realise how dangerous the situation actually had been until I read it from behind the sterile safety of my electronic device and replay the events in my mind in all their vividness.

I relate this incident to Kenneth during one of my visits and show him descriptions of the event from the BBC website online. He is amused and laughs at the silliness of people. Institutional structures or affiliations of tradition, socio-cultural norms, or uncoded values, Ken has never felt the need to define himself by any of these things. Even his parents' long marriage or devout churchgoing did not shape his sense of self or influence him into becoming anything other than who he is.

Ken's passions are entirely self-made and self-taught. He is a lifelong student, a creature of learning, student of life, a life lived for learning and the pursuit of knowledge. His sense of self has been shaped in Belgrave's libraries, coming into being on its shop floors and factories, honed into clarity on his many travels, pages of books, and industrial heritage sites. His idea of belonging was connecting to likeminded people, those with a shared sense of love for books and words and learning as a universal library membership. He held on to his Belgrave library card like a talisman till his last days, a reminder of who he was, what he had become. He never forgot that sense of connectedness, of belonging for as long as he lived. At his funeral I left him a copy of his favourite book, *The Little Prince*, on his open casket, as a going away present.

THEORISING PLACE AS PRACTICED OBJECT OF CONSUMPTION:

A STREET ETHNOGRAPHIC STORY

Volume 2 of 2

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(USHA SUNDARAM)

V. CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: PLACE AS AN OBJECT OF CONSUMPTION

Introduction

This chapter builds on the literature review and methodology chapters, gathers together themes and narratives from the ethnography chapter, and synthesises these meta-analytical narratives towards a gradual process of conceptualisation and theorisation of place in consumption viewed through practices and non-representational theories. The chapter addresses the study objectives to (d) validate and evaluate the relevance of practices in positioning and conceptualising place within consumption; and to (e) critique and empirically validate the resituated place ontology and hierarchy in consumption.

Previously, the literature review chapter has situated place as a construct and its extant treatments in marketing scholarship, juxtaposing its static, cartographic, identity-bound representations against a more philosophical and phenomenological contemplation of place drawn from interdisciplinary inspirations. By starting from a narrow, constrained frame of reference, the discussion on place gradually widens and broadens, opening up the conversation to wider influences and demonstrating the impoverishment of place understanding in marketing against the richness of intellectual material elsewhere. The discussion helps question underlying place concepts in

marketing, the limitations in its treatments, ontological composition, and epistemological explanation, and contextualises it against the possibility of drawing from practices and non-representational theories as means of empirically interrogating place and revisiting its ontological understanding with a view to offering up a new processual conceptualisation and theorisation.

The methodology chapter builds on this and deploys an urban street ethnography as a form of epistemic placemaking practice to interrogate place, using an innovative methodological toolkit and sensitising the craft with a critical reflexive standpoint. The empirical approach not only serves to shape a sense of place as a process and product but also revitalises the methodology itself as a critical reflexive epistemic form of knowledge production.

The ethnography chapter metastasises the field site into a place entity beyond its immediate cartographic, spatial coordinates, and temporal dimensions.

Through multiple micro, meso- and macro-level socio-historical changes the field site 'place' transcends geography and is viewed as a composite beyond its immediate assortment of spaces and sites, themselves in constant flux. Place is constantly repurposed through human and material interactions, prevalent as everyday practices representing the universality of human experiences.

Everyday mundane actions of ordinary people chart and shape the course of place and the ethnography privileges and valorises this ordinariness, and the flow of everyday life enacted through practices which touch upon a range of affective engagements, resonate across a number of phenomenological registers, and cut across assumptions about social structures and individual

agency. The use of non-representational theories allows the ethnography to eschew symbolism and fixation with identities, and for these everyday human actions to be brigaded as practices. Practices and non-representational theories become useful lenses of analyses and heuristic tools with which to understand the quality and intensity of connections which hold people and place together in a symbiotic relationship shaping one another.

This analysis chapter continues on from this point. This chapter uses the themed stories and narratives from the ethnography as scaffolding, and builds an explanatory framework of practices by weaving them through some of the concepts introduced in the literature review. Using the field site as a reference point, the analysis chapter builds temporary conceptual bridgeheads to reach out to ideas and themes that were explored in the literature review and uses it to contextualise the empirical findings. It gradually synthesises and abstracts the findings and empirical data, detaching itself from the immediate field site and slowly begins to conceptualise it as a 'place', leading to theorisation of place through practices and non-representation. The field site gradually becomes the 'place', the construct that lends itself to conceptualisation through the lens of practice and non-representation and this chapter unfolds that process in a staggered, staged manner over two interlinked parts.

Part One, titled *Practices, Body, and Place* begins with the task of illuminating the lens of observation and analysis used to examine place and is intended to illustrate and explore the core phenomenological linkages between body, self, and place with a view to unpacking the phenomenological aspects of practices as bodily enactments. Across various sections and sub-sections of this part of

the chapter, practices are unfurled from non-representational standpoints which actively eschew symbolism and abstraction and are empirically explained against current understandings of non-representational theories. They are discussed against given ideas of habitus, as expressions of pre-dispositions borne out of interactions between social structures and individual agency that bring together people in an assemblage of everyday belief systems. The discussion then moves beyond habitus and practices enacted as routinized habits, and drawing from theoretical developments in practice-based scholarship, examines practices from phenomenological perspectives. It analyses them as bodily practices enacted through a range of registers and affective shades that touch upon the cognitive, emotional, corporeal, and sensory engagements that human actors bring to practices. The human body is the nexus, the central intersection of affective engagements in practice. Affect in turn is viewed not merely as emotional expressions but inclusive of responses and influences shaping a human actor's action-potential. Practice and affective engagement in practices in turn help unpack the coeval relationship between body and place, the body internalising place and place in turn shaping body as a spatial vehicle.

The discussion then moves on to explicating the interactions of practices with and within place where the sites, spaces, and temporal dynamics are perceived as mechanisms that facilitate practices as events and dynamic processes. Practices are seen to wax and wane alongside the intensities of affective engagement with which they are enacted and these in turn are affected by the changes in spatial and temporal dynamics in alignment with macro- and meso-level socio-economic and cultural-politico-historical changes in the landscape. This enables an outline of place to emerge shaped through sites and historical

timespans and the discussion unpacks the range of settings from servicescapes to civic and public and identifies the interpenetration and overlap of practices across different settings. This is then contrasted with some of the static, cartographic representations of place in order to empirically interrogate their relevance.

Part Two, titled *Protean Practices, Transcendental Place*, gathers together this synthesis and proceeds on to gradual abstraction. It examines the mutual shaping of place and practice. Place begins to be textured by the affective engagement of enacted practices and movements of people in, within, and away from it. Place is shaped and inscribed through its practices just as bodily and mental enactments and memories of practices are imprinted by place, a mutually inscribed somatography of practiced geography. By contextualising it against some of the essentialist reductive treatments of place in contemporary managerial sciences, the groundwork is laid for questioning some of the assumptions that lie beyond extant treatments, the fallacy of viewing place through the reductive dualism of space and time, and their formative ontology in the hierarchy vis-à-vis place. The section revisits some of the key areas introduced earlier in literature to contextualise the empirical interrogation of place as field site.

Place is now perceived as a gathering of practices, their enactments, and processes. It is constantly textured by and in turn influences practices enacted through a ceaseless movement. The underpinning intensity of affective engagements and their richness waxes and wanes and shapes the affective atmosphere as a thick or thin place, both of which can alternate or occur simultaneously, depending on the range and intensity of practices enacted.

Through a constant alternating of incoming and outgoing processes, the affective atmospheres of a place are shaped that is reflective of vibrant socio-historical contexts which are perceived by the richness of their spatial and temporal dynamics.

An emergent realisation of place is shaped through this discussion which resituates space and time as constitutive elements of time and lays claim to conceptualising and empirically examining place as the universal abstract that is comprised of its component elements. Practices take on a protean quality while place assumes a transcendental nature, both shaping and mutually imbricating one another through a textured somatography.

The concluding sections of this chapter lead towards the final stage of abstraction and conceptualisation of place. Firstly the ontological hierarchy of place as the universal abstract and space and time as its components, is established. Next place is contextualised against the broader phenomenon of consumption and the discussion revisits extant understandings of consumption away from the dominant logic of production. It examines the role of human actors, actions, and action spaces through the reductive lens of the marketplace and contrasts it with the empirical interrogation of phenomenological place, and its practice-based understanding. By linking the trialectics of consumption, place, and practice, the emergent conceptualisation of place as object of consumption through moments of practice is articulated. Imbued with affective engagement and shaped as eventuating, happening place atmosphere, place is shaped as a conceptual and ontological universal entity, as it is practiced, constructed, and consumed as an object through practices beyond its perceivable spatial coordinates or temporal dynamics.

The chapter thus enables addressing the selected study objectives of validating practice and non-representational theories as heuristic tools to interrogate and analyse place, situating place as an object through practices within the domain of consumption, conceptualising and empirically validating place through practices, and offering an empirically validated repositioning of place ontology and its hierarchical relationship with space and time using the empirical field site as a context for place as a construct.

I. PRACTICES, BODY, AND PLACE

Non-Representational Practices and Habitus

Stories from the street presented in the ethnography previously are vignettes of people's everyday lives, snapshots spliced and sliced as themed narratives denoting routinized actions, habits, and life sequences enacted in place. Elicited through ethnographic work as placemaking practice (Pink 2008, 2010) deploying a rich methodological hybrid toolkit (Dewsbury 2009, Doel and Clarke 2007, Latham 2003), these practices reflect the universality of human experiences of people from multiple backgrounds and walks of life coming together to negotiate their past, navigate the present, and manage their future through shaping oneself, families, communities, networks, attachments, personal and professional relationships in and through the geographical place they inhabit.

These narratives do not embalm meaning through static social encounters or privilege fixed geographies, nor do they use symbolism as primary epistemological vehicle for analysis. Instead they privilege human and non-human non-representational processualities (Thrift 1996, 1997, 2000a, 2000b) which mark the *onflow* of everyday life (Thrift 2007 as performative *doings* (Dewsbury et al 2002, Dewsbury 2003). They highlight mundane life not simply as humdrum or quotidian but as expressions of permanent and fleeting encounters, as shared and lived processual registers of experiences (Dewsbury et al 2002), as rich kaleidoscope of cognitive competencies, affective intensities,

tactical capabilities, and sensory dispositions, and as methods that co-produce the world and imbue them with meaning for respondents and ethnographer alike (Dewsbury, 2000, Dewsbury, Harrison, Rose, and Wylie 2002, Latham 2003, Lorimer 2005, Thrift 2000b, Whatmore 2002, 2006). Through everyday practices, it is apparent that people are shaped by personal geographies which they use to interpret their socio-cultural environments that motivate them and affect their dispositions.

Choices involving work, employment, and earning livelihoods are influenced as much by people's particular socio-economic structures as they are by opportunities afforded within their specific geographical environment. Ken exemplifies pre-war generation growing up during times of depression and economic recession while Mick, Brian, Joe and others exemplify post-war baby boomers coming out of hardship into a more optimistic society. Their practices of earning livelihoods by going into factory work can be interpreted as much as a predisposition of blue collar working-class social system as it can be seen as a decision to optimise available economic resources of the time given Belgrave's rapid transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy. The dominance of East African Indian migrants in Belgrave's trade and enterprise is conditioned as much by professional and socio-economic predisposition as it by the community's efforts to compensate for what was lost during upheavals, displacement, and immigration into a new country.

Similarly means of spending, saving, and investing money are fairly consistent with people's socio-cultural predispositions. Thrift, frugality, financial prudence, and micro-management of money runs as a common thread amongst a cross

section of backgrounds resulting from varying degrees of hardship, poverty, economic insecurity, and levels of exposure to an emerging consumerist society. These practices also contributed to varying degrees of effort in accumulating socio-cultural capital and personal enrichment. Ken eschewed the pleasures of consumerism in his pursuit of cultural and educational capital while Mick and his friends sought to exploit opportunities available in social and entertainment pursuits through their preference for pubs, dance halls, tea rooms, picture houses, and bingo halls, and eventually into leisure pursuits of overseas holidays and cruises following their move away from Belgrave into suburbia. Their practices are reflective of socio-cultural predispositions as much as an exploitation of available opportunities.

Attitudes to investing and creating endowments for future generations vary somewhat. Native populations demonstrate far less propensity for long-term financial investments compared to migrant communities across a range of backgrounds from Caribbean and Portuguese to those from the sub-continent and East Africa, who are more inclined towards long term financial planning and risk-averse decision making in their choices. Family, relationships, and extended networks across geographies, all feature in these decisions as evidenced through culturally oriented investments such as gold, financial alliances forged through arranged marriages, property ownership, business enterprise investments, pursuit of financially rewarding professional middle-class careers, or carving out overseas retirement plans. They reflect Hofstedian cultural stereotypes as much as they portray varying responses to personal socio-economic and cultural circumstances and utilisation of available opportunities.

Some of these practices and choices can be explained against the framework of habitus (Bourdieu 1998, 2005, Parkin 1997), a sociological force field that envelops people's actions as social beings conditioned by social structures, their choices presupposed by certain innate dispositions. Habitus is seen as a guiding influence shaping human actions as people pursue strategic goals and interests, the influence of habitus acting as a cultural and symbolic power which is legitimised through the interplay between agency and structure. Social structures become normative tendencies that shape lasting individual dispositions or propensities to think and act in pre-determined ways. Habitus is visualised as enduring but transferable across contexts and changeable over long periods of time but primarily produced by an individual's position within a broader social structure which enables its reproduction.

Sociological explanations of class structures and attendant habitus can thus be used to explain consistencies between native working class people and their choices around employment, livelihood, and working practices, as well as leisure and entertainment choices in the pursuit of socio-cultural capital.

Similarly immigrant attitudes towards work and money can also be explained in terms of structural predispositions ingrained in their habitus that causes them to reproduce those structures in their host society through consistent actions.

Similar consistencies arising out of habitus, structural conditioning, and predispositions can also be observed amidst conservative, collective, tight knit migrant communities in their everyday practices of family and extended relationship networks, food and cooking, prayer rituals and attendance at places of worship, adherence to institutional norms such as marriage and traditional

orthodoxies, and conservative attitudes towards sex and sexuality. These consistencies are also perpetuated across geography and distance. Food norms for instance are a form of social identification and bonding for migrant communities. Vegetarianism for example is a cultural norm, a valuable source of economic capital materialised through business opportunities in restaurants, while also a portable talisman carried across geographical distances into faraway US and Australia while relaxed attitudes towards meat and alcohol enables Goan immigrants in Britain to connect to Portuguese communities. Practices thus become carriers of habitus and norms as a way of people seeking familiarity in a new country.

Some practices however are not always consistent with habitus and are in contradiction or conflict with predispositions or expected social-structural norms which are disrupted, desiccated, enhanced, or destroyed through circumstances. Caribbean and Portuguese communities from peasantry and seafaring backgrounds, and educated middle class migrants from the sub-continent move into blue collar work in Britain, well-paid compared to native circumstances but menial work nevertheless. Recent Eastern European economic migrants destined for blue collar work move upwards through social systems into white collar professional services while well-off immigrants from stable backgrounds sometime descend into illegal practices and criminality owing to circumstances. Similar observations can be made about practices of food, cooking, eating, worship, and changing attitudes towards family, relationships, religion, dress codes, and sexual orientations amongst people from different backgrounds in Belgrave as they modify levels of consistency with structural socio-cultural predispositions over time.

Practices thus reproduce habitus and re-enact predispositions and mental structures which condition people's sense of place and petrifies their social limits through boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Bourdieu's conceptualisations of habitus share some similarities with Foucauldian notions of power except that its implementation is softer and less punitive in comparison with the latter's enforcement through disciplinary exercise and institutionalised structures. Implementation of Bourdieu's habitus is underpinned by the notion of doxa, where the natural, social world that shapes people's actions and pre-dispositions appear self-evident (1972, 1977, 1992) and extends beyond more than common belief in giving rise to common action.

Doxa expresses itself around suitable, self-evident, almost stereotypical practices that are in varying degrees of consistency with habitus and manifest through in-out group behaviours (Cresswell 1996a, 1996b). Practices of choosing work, means of earning livelihoods, ways of spending, saving, and investing money, can be consistent with predispositions of social structures and perpetuate conditioning, leading to pursuit of socio-economic and cultural capital while the same pursuit can also result in norms and actions inconsistent with what is expected. Similarly attitudes towards food, heritage, traditions, marriage, worship, and sexual identity can be both consistent with expected socio-cultural predispositions as a way of perpetuating habitus at the same time as they can be acts of alienation and atomisation. Doxa can shape the role of certain cultural artefacts such as meat eating as both in-group and out-group behaviours while perpetuating a sense of place and belonging or conversely displacement in attitudes towards sexual orientations or traditional marriages.

These can be enforced through institutional pressures or be organically self-modified or self-policed. Through it all the norms that bind and hold social structures and habitus in place can be strengthened and multiplied or conversely can loosen, dissipate, and decline to be replaced by other norms. All this can be enacted and perpetuated with varying levels of commitment in place and across geographies.

Doxa can be a helpful guideline in understanding unfamiliar systems and structures and can help people shape varying degrees of connections to place. It is especially useful in marketing scholarship as a way of understanding place as servicescape and how shopper behaviour in specific settings mediates construction and perpetuation of ethnic (Rosenbaum 2005, Rosenbaum and Montoya 2007), racial (Alexander 2003), and cultural-heritage (Penaloza 2000, 2001) identity. As doxa morphs and evolves around in-group and out-group positions and as rules governing the pursuit and maintenance of different forms of capital change with time, practices will also evolve with changing norms of habitus. While useful as an explanatory mechanism, doxa and by extension habitus can sometimes be limiting if not misleading, and constrain researchers from seeking more meaningful explanations for practices enacted in place.

Phenomenological Registers

Explanations that focus on relationships between structures or systems on the one hand and human action on the other privilege conventional sociological or cultural anthropological standpoints in a bid to explain all social phenomena in terms of either structuralist approaches or methodological individualism, owing

to disciplinary antecedents in Bourdieu's work on habitus where practices are resultant from the interactions of human and social force fields. Some of these explanations do not adequately capture the role of human agency or cultural-historical contexts (Ortner 1984, 2006) for practices and processes of reproducing society.

A middle ground between structures and individual actions draws from and builds on works of Bourdieu and Giddens, for a more phenomenological approach to understanding practices (Schatzki 1996, Schatzki et al 2001, Reckwitz 2002, Warde 2005). This field of work, while paying closer attention to culture and history, stresses the centrality of the human body for enactment of practices, explaining them as integrative or dispersed based on the intensities of affect and sensations they embody. The phenomenological turn in practice theories centralises the human body as the nexus of all practices. Practices are performative doings or enactments of bodily actions, an array of activities co-constituted by bodies, and further unpacked as routines, bodily and mental enactments as routinized behaviours. Enacted through the human body, the individual becomes the unique crossing point of practices, and the human body the primary vehicle with which to understand them.

Such theories reflect a shared understanding with non-representational methods in that both valorise the corporeal, embodied, and intangible aspects of everyday life. The body's enactment of practices and corporeal engagement is framed by habitus which is now understood as the link between subject and environment. Habitus shapes the body and bodily actions and the body in turn is the vehicle through which the environment is mediated. Thus habitus

connects the lived place and geographical self. In unpacking the central role of the human body connecting to place, both practice and non-representational theories address the array of phenomenological registers through which the body and practices can be understood (Anderson and Smith 2001, Harrison 2000, Latham and Conradson 2003, Longhurst 1997, McCormack 2002, McDowell 1997, Rodaway 1994, Thrift and Dewsbury 2000, Valentine 1999). These phenomenological registers range across the corporeal, kinaesthetic, and memorial but primarily register around affect and sensation in creating a framework for experiencing the world through practices. Moreover such practices can also be understood as social enactments in that a multitude of practices are interwoven around a collective practical understanding, in itself constituting a social field. These shared practices are embodied by human actors, intricately and materially interlinked, collectivised, maintained and diffused through space and time.

Themed practices drawn from the field site are enacted by people from different walks of life and backgrounds as an array of activities and bodily practices ranging across a spectrum of cognitive, corporeal, affective, kinaesthetic, and memorial registers through a range of varying intensities and degrees of commitment which in turn affects the intensity of action-potential and shapes the nature of people's disposition to and in place. Through working practices for instance, we can observe not only socio-structural predispositions and pragmatic exercise of individual choice, but also work as enactments of human bodily practice, of people's interactions with Belgrave's factories, sites, and spaces, and the range of emotional, affective, sensory, corporeal, kinaesthetic, and immersive engagements that enriched them.

For many especially native Belgrave residents, work practices symbolised financial and economic security, utilitarian rewards, and monetary reassurance through steady incomes, home ownership, and cushioned retirement, while also opening up opportunities to acquire social confidence and associated rewards of travel, holidays, leisure, and disposable income. Work practices engendered pragmatism, industriousness, resourcefulness, great practical skills and dexterity which are evident till today in related areas of DIY, technology, home repairs, building and construction, electronics, and other home management skills. Money management practices are shaded by thrift, frugality, resourcefulness, and great entrepreneurial instincts that allows people to optimise incomes beyond retirement and live life to the fullest.

Furthermore, work practices enacted in place become a spring board to extending people's social, cultural, emotional, and spatial horizons, a natural progression of innate affective capabilities that has opened up opportunities for personal and social enrichment, sensory engagement, and intellectual stimulation through learning, books, overseas travel, cruise holidays, machinery, industrial history, fine foods and wines, while also fostering enjoyment of everyday pleasures such as television, bingo, online games, gardening, and shopping. Work practices have engendered strong work ethos, mental discipline, and pride in personal presentation in areas of health, exercise, modes of dressing, and social routines in pubs and clubs. The camaraderie founded and sustained through work and socialisation amongst native residents nourishes physical and mental wellbeing, structures people's communal and personal relationships through friendships, neighbourliness, and broader citizenship roles, and instils in them great sense of responsibility towards family and community.

These shared, collective practices are manifest through attitudes such as common sense approach to problem solving, confidence, mental resilience, and a general self-sufficiency in managing their day to day life. For many who grew up in the shadow of real hardship and poverty, there is very little mawkish self-indulgence or self-pity, just a cheery stoicism, self-reliant independence, and great appreciation for all the simple physical, mental, and sensory pleasures. For some others amongst the native residents though work practices have fostered less salubrious bodily and mental engagement including bouts of drinking, gambling, depression, and violence, long-term unemployment, instability, gradual spiral into welfare dependency while money management practices similarly are shaded by profligacy, insecurity, and thanklessness.

A similar range of corporeal and affective intensities can be observed amongst subsequent waves of migrant communities into Belgrave. Amongst the early immigrants from the sub-continent, practices of working and earning livelihoods are driven by deep levels of insecurity, alienation, loneliness, and disorientation. Enacted as a collective practice among these communities, working lives were characterised by extreme hard labour, aspects of self-denial, sacrifice, asceticism, and even a sense of self-flagellation. Tales are rife with stories of physical and mental struggles undergone in the process of establishing themselves in a new country. From physical challenges of coping with harsh, unfamiliar weather conditions and food practices to emotional challenges of racial differentiation, isolation, distancing, disorientation, and alienation, life was a constant bodily negotiation of assorted hardships. Practices of work and managing money were coloured by emotional palettes of duty,

responsibility, compulsion, pressure, guilt, shame, insecurity, and fear of failure.

To deal with these challenges people developed coping mechanisms through an array of bodily, mental, and emotional practices that deployed a range of skills and competencies around touchpoints of family, religion, and community. Food, cooking, and eating practices became exercises in resourcefulness, ingenuity, and survival instincts. Religious practices similarly were crafted out of ingenuity and makeshift resourcefulness in the use of available sites, spaces, and material artefacts. Social circles and communities were formed around immediate and extended families and these were also used to build social boundaries and horizons. Building and establishing community ties were focused on strengthening and consolidating the immigrant position in an alien country, a process of strengthening defences rather than reaching outward into neighbourly or citizenship roles.

Joy, happiness, and jollity were communal in the context of family, community, and religion, while personal enjoyment was shaded by frugality, simplicity, austerity and extreme self-denial. Holidays and leisure time was spent connecting to homeland, a return to roots, rather than external ventures into personal or social enrichment. Distant homelands rather than immediate geographies fostered deeper, more intense affective engagements including a sense of belonging, identification, familiarity, comfort, and affiliation. Memories were tinged with nostalgia, and sensory imaginations of heat, warmth, sunshine, colour, and familiar sounds. Forming financial and family bridges in the form of

networks, connections, and property investments in native lands were cognitive exercises in pragmatism, emotional reassurance, expressions of nostalgia, and compensations for the sense of atomisation, fragmentation, and isolation they felt in Britain.

Yet there was also a semblance of self-denial as they dealt with selfish, insensitive, and greedy relatives and the sense that they were only valued for their economic contributions and social worth. Many of these people remain suspended till date in a curious state of in-between-ness, a twilight existence caught between conflicting levels of emotional bonds, alienation, pragmatism, and disillusionment between native and adaptive homelands. This is equally evident in many other related practices from working and earning livelihoods to saving and investing, religious and communal rituals, attitudes to prayer, food, and formal relationships and socialisation, perceived across a spectrum of affective, corporeal, and emotional engagements and intensities, that are conflicted and mangled between a past geography and present life.

A range of phenomenological registers perceived as an array of bodily, emotional, spatial, social, memorial, and cultural engagements across different levels of intensities can be perceived in a clutch of practices amongst the East African Indian migrants into Belgrave. This community is characterised by a strong sense of pragmatism and rational choice making in their cognitive decisions which is driven by a deep sense of insecurity owing to their circumstances. Labelling themselves as African in nationality, memories, emotional connections, and nostalgia and Indian by cultural heritage, they still distanced themselves from both geographies in choosing to settle in Britain

because they had the forethought to retain their British passports from colonial times rather than embrace African nationalities and citizenships. Their attitudes to past homelands in Africa was coloured by bitter-sweet emotions, pride in being the dominant economic and social minority and bitterness in being hounded out of homeland for the same reasons while their attitudes towards their Indian heritage was ambivalent, fidelity to cultural practices and identities, juxtaposed with contempt towards and sense of superiority over fellow countryman both in Britain and India.

Their cultural identity though became a handy and valuable resource for building economic, social, and cultural capital as it was appropriated, sacralised, and commercialised through multiple retail settings and shops presenting a celluloid and stereotyped pastiche of exotica offered up for commercial gaze. Their pursuit and achievement of economic capital also paved the way for consolidating social, cultural, and political capital through clever, pragmatic management of family networks and financial investments. Across multiple work, professional, and money management practices, we observe notions of thrift, frugality, and insecurity interspersed with tremendously rational, thoughtful, canny, and sometimes exploitative economic practices, intense status consciousness, ostentation, and conspicuous consumption. There is a tremendous sense of confidence, entrepreneurialism, opportunism, and risk taking behaviour on display, a penchant for looking outward, not inward, and aspirations driven by hopes of success rather than fear of failure. Socio-economic success breeds and perpetuates across trades, enterprise, business, family connections, and diaspora networks.

Optimism and positive confidence in spheres of work and money are balanced by comparatively more conservative attitudes towards institutionalised socio-cultural norms underpinning family, religion, and food, evident in practices around religious worship, prayers, rituals, festive celebrations, arranged marriages, and culinary strictures. Norms and associated practices become porous, flexible, and mutable as pragmatism dictates but remain comparatively inflexible and rigid in certain attitudes to sexuality and disability. Cultural norms are relaxed in the face of social fluidity and cosmopolitanism without regressing into dogma. Private, personal practices of food and religion as well as communal gatherings and festive occasions are monetised and commercialised into retail opportunities, marketed and branded for collective identity building and consolidated into socio-political clout. Hard work and success are emphasised and lauded as both individual and collective achievements, cultural adherence to norms are lauded and valorised, while failures, non-compliance, and alternative choices in life are denied, negated, marginalised, and sometimes negated.

Through the lens of these everyday practices that represent the universality of human experience, we can see interactions of social structures that pre-determine people's goal-oriented life strategies, with exercise of individual agentic choices. These practices encapsulate a range of feeling-states that capture the affective, corporeal, kinaesthetic, memorial, and action-potential of varying competencies that human actors bring to the process in practical enactments, shaping people's connection to the environment and disposition to place, and creating a framework for experiencing place through practices.

Through the intensities of affect, sensation, and cognitive capabilities, these

practices are built and sustained over periods of time as a combination of multiple phenomenological registers.

Shades of Affective Practices

Stepping away from characterising practices through broad brush strokes of sociological-structural or cultural-anthropological stereotypes, or labelling collective behaviours as socio-cultural identity characteristics, a more nuanced understanding of shared practices can emerge from charting the spectrum of affective shades captured through these phenomenological registers. In people's personal stories, narratives, and affective intensities, these everyday practices that reflect the universality of human experience, captivate attention as a rich, moveable feast, and emotional palette of lived experiences (Anderson 2009). Through varying shades of cognitive, emotional, mental, corporeal, and sensory intensities, they shape an individual's ability to enact practices, their disposition towards place, and the affective potential of place itself.

Practices of work and earning livelihoods, be it agrarian employment, industrial work, or trade opportunities are approached by people with varying degrees of affect, emotional, and practical competencies. For many, work is means to an end, a pragmatic way of supporting oneself and family, and fulfilling responsibilities. Work keeps body and soul together and alleviates financial insecurities but is never self-defining or self-limiting. It facilitates life and living, is a springboard for personal and social enrichment, and a gateway to joy, comfort, friendship, companionship, adventure, exploration, and life lived to the fullest. Work is a central wellspring that opens up the individual self, outward to

the world, expands individual and collective horizons, and means of self-actualisation. Work practices stoke intellectual curiosity and a quest for personal and cognitive self-fulfilment, while also equipping people with practical hands-on self-sufficiency, mental equanimity, and stoicism to face life's vicissitudes with cheery heartiness. Work practices shapes perspective, life's big learning opportunities, and small moments of pleasures and thrills.

For some others work defines life, the be all and end all of existence. Work practices and means of earning livelihoods are underpinned by a deep sense of duty, responsibility, family pressure and expectations, compulsion, sacrifice, insecurity, and sometimes guilt, shame, and self-loathing. It is rooted in fear of failure and for the future, in turn robbing joys of living life in the present. For some others, work means defining and shaping success, and begets confidence, optimism, and an outward looking approach to life. It is aligned with economic success, high social status, measured by social standing, and often lived vicariously through younger generations. Social, economic, cultural, and personal selves seamlessly meld together across generations and family networks in defining work-related success. For some others work is shaded with moral and ethical quandaries. It plays out through opportunism, resourcefulness, survival instincts, and desperation but is also rife with shades of illegality, questionable morals, grey areas of existence, near invisibility amongst society, and exploitation of fellow humans, of those less fortunate, and the broader socio-economic-legal system they belong to.

Money associated with work is also shaded by an extended spectrum of affective engagements played out through practices of saving, investing, and

spending. For some money is simply an appendage, a sustenance of basic needs, but never allowed to dominate life. For many others, money is to be respected but not venerated, never frittered, never wasted, hard earned but well spent. It supports family life and essential living but also opens doors to other pleasures and so is stretched and used to maximum. Money also represents small thrills and pleasures, small gains from online offers or bargains, rare lottery windfalls, tiny incomes earned from doing odd jobs but the thrill more in the hunt and the victory. Cash provides greater sensory, tangible, tactile pleasures than cheque books or electronic payment cards. Money also lubricates pleasures of retired life, meals and drinks in the pub, Christmas and other celebratory occasions, prudently used, always seeking added value. Work and money are not treated with equal respect by others. Loss of work and income results in loss of self-esteem in some, a descent into alcoholism, gambling, violence, long-term unemployment, welfare dependency, and public disorder, and sustains through generations as learned behaviours.

Means of earning livelihoods and managing money thus are shaded by a range of intensities, emotional and cognitive dependencies, corporeal and mental engagements, and engender a range of related attitudes, emotions, values, beliefs, and attachments through assorted practices.

Work and money related practices support people's quest to build their lives while their appreciation of it is marked by practices of celebrating and grieving shaded by a range of affective capabilities involving varying degrees of cognitive, sensory, memorial, and emotional intensities. Celebrations are expressions of joy, affirmations of private and personal triumphs, and

commemorations of secular and religious seasonal landmarks. They are occasions for social and public gatherings of family and friends, reinforcements of visible social status, while also being intensely private religious communions with invisible ancestors, gods, and spirits. Feasting and unseemly gluttony sit alongside fasting, sacrifice, self-denial, and solemnity.

In private celebrations are socio-psychological anchors for displaced communities, a spiritual adhesive for binding people together in collective actions of ritualistic belief. They are marked by resourcefulness and creativity in how people recreate authentic celebratory rituals through makeshift practices, expedient resources, and make-do spaces. Cultural heritage and social bonds are fertilised, spaces of worship revitalised through repurposing new faiths and beliefs. Sometimes though as shared ritualised enactments of collective beliefs, celebrations come unhitched from their cultural and spiritual moorings and float away into public realm as abstractions, cultural appropriations, and faux-authentic heritage commodification. They grow into larger-than-life public exercises as social and communal standings, losing their richness, and becoming parodies of themselves.

If celebrations are public then grieving remains private, mostly. Grieving practices are enacted with stoic matter-of-factness and philosophical detachment, grief memorialised as a haunting, spectral presence, evident in its absence and loss, of ways of life, cultures, homelands, possessions, processes, rituals, practices, spaces, and life moments. Grief etiolates in loneliness and isolation, is memorialised through snatched remembrances, sensory rushes, smells, tastes, sensations of warmth, material artefacts, spatial ruins, archival records, yellowing photos, faded life remnants, and sometimes even ghostly

sightings and haunting apparitions. Grieving practices debilitate and atrophy some while strengthening, resolving, and regrouping in others as they learn to move on. Memories are turned into connected remembrances, when grief related practices turn shrines and places of worship into sites of veneration, or remain forgotten and faded away in cemeteries, tombstones covered in overgrown weeds. Grieving practices monetise and commercialise grief through culture specific mourning and themed funerals, but also gather family, friends, and strangers alike to turn funerals into spontaneously joyous celebrations of life lived rather than loss mourned.

Food is the *raison d'être* of existence, the motive that drives most to work, earn money, and shape livelihoods. People connect in varying degrees of physical, emotional, and sensory intimacy, meaning, and intensity to cooking, eating, and other food-related practices. For some food and eating is matter-of-fact, functional, demanding little or no cognitive or emotional investment. For some others food consumption is marked by extremes of gluttony and self-indulgence, neuroses-free, guilt-free ravenous appetites while others relate to food through self-denial, sacrifice, and moralising virtuousness of health and wellbeing fetishes. Some are careless and indifferent to food while for some, it flows in one seamless sensory intensity from plate to body without barriers and intermediaries of cutlery. For some, food is marked by a duality of attitudes, functionalism, frugality, and thrift in private, and social enjoyment, leisure, companionship, and joys of everyday life in public. Exploring opportunities around food provide life affirmation of comfort, luxury, affordability, and social status, embody belongingness to a larger membership circles, build invisible

bridges with absent homelands, and invite friends and strangers alike to the table in a welcoming embrace. Bereft of that context, robbed of merriment, food emphasises alienation, isolation, and loneliness, a tangible memento of loss and grief.

The practice of food shopping is as much about scouring for savings, thrift, and seeking value for money, as it is about the primeval thrill of bargain hunting that requires highly complex negotiation skills, accurate reading of behavioural cues, cut and rapier thrust of verbal banter, and the patience and endurance of a hunter stalking prey. At-home cooking rituals embody intricate enactments of resourcefulness, ingenuity, creativity, skills, and dazzling levels of artistry so effortless as to seem magical. Kitchens are spaces imbued with the intuitive intimacy of complex systems, tacit and implicit knowledge, inherited skills, innate understanding of ingredients, a seamless synchronicity and dexterity of hands, muscle memory, and practiced social camaraderie amongst rhythmical dances of textures, fragrances, and flavours.

Material manifestations of food related practices are functional objects such as heirloom knives, rolling pins, tips and instructions, or sacralised as symbolic cultural artefacts like treasured recipes and gastronomic contexts of food enactments. Food, the cooking and partaking of it reaffirms and shapes personal and social identities, validates some existences as nurturers and carers, and reinforces disconnections, loneliness, and hopelessness in others. Fast follows feast follows fast in a cycle of social, cultural, and religious causes. Food reaffirms cultural roots but also catalyses ideological power plays through enforcement of food taboos, rebellion, and permissiveness. Food as cultural

resource also becomes invaluable as an economic resource to be exploited for commercial opportunities, shaping individual and collective economic interests and social capital, and lends itself to branding the street as an ethnoscape.

Shades of affect colour practices enacted to give people's lives, structure and meaning, enrich living, and to which are attached varying levels of meaning, pragmatism, rationality, symbolism, and affirmation. These practices are rooted in people's formative bonds with their particular socio-cultural contexts and institutionalised norms, and are exercised as individual choices guided by personal beliefs, motivations, cognitive and emotional pulls, and sensory engagements. These practices help people seek to build or cement their connections to a broader environment, to universalities bigger than themselves. Some practices are enacted in the mind, driven by a pursuit of intellectual stimulation, cognitive processing, curiosity, personal enrichment, and belongingness to a higher cause beyond bodily engagement. Some are enacted in bodily physicality and bring together an assortment of practical skills that help people stay grounded and connect them in horizontal social networks of friendships, neighbourliness, and broader citizenship roles.

Learning languages, music, and dance are for skill building, for exploring new opportunities, and connecting to lost homelands, socio-cultural roots, and familial bonds, while also intensifying people's bodily, sensory engagement with social systems, heritage contexts, and cultural rituals, ethnic and religious identities. Institutionalised norms facilitate practices of familial connections. Marriages, wedding planning and preparation, searching for and cementing marriage alliances, are complex cognitive exercises in negotiating family and

financial priorities, and help perpetuate the institution of marriage through emotional bonds, extended connections, and stable networks. Marriage ceremonies are psychedelic explosions of colours, sensations, and ostentation. Marriage rituals reproduce norms of stability, conservatism, and family values in many while proving a yoke for others, binding and restraining them to subjective value judgements. Breaking free of these practices can be statements of freedom, rebellion, and self-definition, but also tainted with desire, guilt and shame.

Religion, prayers, and ritualised practices of worship similarly evoke a range of emotions, from intense spiritual communion, a near-sexualised intimacy with an anthropomorphised deity, and immense sensory engagement replete with prayer, dance, music, fragrances, and religious offerings, to indifference, non-belief, and spiritual detachment. Systems, values, beliefs, and procedures surrounding religion, marriage, language, food, sexual orientation, arts, clothes, and culture are played out and reproduced through cultural artefacts within social systems but are animated by a range of cognitive, affective, and sensory processes, resonating across a number of phenomenological registers in how they are adapted, modified, panegyrised, or debased by people in everyday life.

Beyond being perceived as simple outcomes of inherent predispositions and learned behaviours embodied in particular socio-cultural contexts or interactions between structural influences and agentic choices exercised, these practices can be seen to reflect the themed universality of human experiences of people drawn from multiple walks of life in all their raw essence. They can be phenomenologically explained as performative bodily enactments that in turn

capture a spectrum of affective shades (Anderson 2009) ranging across corporeal, cognitive, emotional, sensory, and kinaesthetic engagements in varying intensities. These practices are viewed as simple human actions by human actors without being labelled and categorised through the limiting lens of the marketplace. They are touchpoints for how the human body expresses such a range of intensities in affect as a form of emotional expression, a state of emotion, and action as response to that emotion (Hardt 2007).

Through the empirical depiction of everyday practices we observe how people and bodies become central to the enactment of practices, how human actors bring affect as a range of emotions, feelings, and expressions to their interactions and encounters with material objects and other human actors in place. We also observe how affect shapes the individual's potential, shades the intensity of the practice itself, be it working or eating or celebrating, and manifests the body and its action-potential as a lived force (Deleuze 1988), constituting an opulent richness of shades of affective practices. In the act of its performative enactment, affect transcends mere emotions to encompass a range of intensities in feelings and expressions which in turn impact on individual ability and competency to enact said practices (Massumi 2002).

Affect as a term is a more sumptuous bounty of mere emotions. In encompassing a range of cognitive, corporeal, and sensory engagements which all go to make up the human body, affect impacts the human body's power and disposition towards the world, and is in turn impacted by the world, manifestations of which can be felt through material artefacts, actors, and presences. Affect affects and is affected. In its intensity and power of such

interactive encounters, affect enriches and augments the body's potential to do, to act, to enact – the action-potential, or *potential agenda* (Spinoza 1989) which shapes an individual's disposition to the world and in place through their practices and their shades of affect.

Practices and (in) Place

Just as practices and their enactments are affected by phenomenological registers and their range of affective intensities, they are also impacted by their interactions with and in place, and its spatial-environmental elements. In the performance of practices as bodily enactments in place, the human body becomes the spatial vehicle through which human actors mediate their environment, the intersection of cognitive, emotional, and sensory engagements, and remnants of social structures and agentic free will. Practices are mechanisms that connect body and self with place, the actions through which people realise, internalise, and express habit, affect, cognitive engagement, and sensation, which in turn is expressed and realised as action-potential (Spinoza 1989) in place. The nuanced richness of practices and their affective engagement is apprehended by means of affect which link the self in place. The intensity of affective engagement that shades practices is in itself shaped by being in place, and place in turn is shaped by the intensity of affective encounters enacted through practices.

In place, the human body's affective engagement is shaped through its practical interactions with aspects of the spatial environment including sites, settings, homes, public spaces, buildings, landscapes, street furniture, architecture, and

material manifestations, all of which impact upon and shape practices. Practices are also affected by time, its dynamics and rhythms which impact upon the range and intensity of affect expressed. Thus affect and the range of phenomenological registers underpinning everyday practice can help contemplate how people and place connect to one another and can be examined as interpenetrative and continually interactive, dynamic sets of relationships between body, self, practice, affect, and place. Practices are explanatory mechanisms, scaffolds through which life is shaped in place. In an empirical context, practices can be observed through their interactions with spatial-temporal frameworks, how they play out amongst different settings in varying degrees of intensity of affective engagement, and how they are shaped by their interactions through space and time.

Working practices in Belgrave and their affective competencies have evolved over a trajectory of spatial changes that reflect centuries of macro-level socio-economic changes. Primarily an agrarian society centuries ago where work was predominantly agricultural, Belgrave's past is now visible only as archaeological ruins or in the few green spaces still within public domain. Agrarian practices in the form of farming and food habits though can be perceived across multiple spaces and variety of practices. Skills like pickling, brining, preserving, foraging, making a range of chutneys, jams, and relishes, growing flourishing kitchen gardens are all habits nurturing the genetic strain of an agricultural legacy, nourished through internalised memories, learned and intuitive knowledge, tacit and implicit skills. These household practices are adapted, modified, and sustained by people from different backgrounds in assorted spaces over time for varying reasons.

Essential home and food related practices that evolved from an agricultural working legacy were kept alive by native residents as a way of stretching frugal household resources, optimising seasonal produce, and meagre rations. In cramped tenements, bedsits, and terraced homes, these practices provided a healthy, thrifty means of sustaining family and following improved living standards and move into retirement suburbia, continue to catalyse fun, social encounters, and collective bonding decades later. These practices have mutated and transplanted into the lives and cramped terrace homes of subsequent waves of migrants from assorted backgrounds, as a means of sustaining traditional food habits in a new country, expanding culinary repertoire, and maintaining connections to homelands. They sustain an essential sensibility related to food as the fulcrum for a healthy work and family life.

These practices have also catalysed thriving home-based enterprises as a resourceful way of supplementing income, initially in homes, and then gradually into streets, public spaces, and eventually into full-fledged business enterprises. They have fertilised market opportunities, created and shaped marketspaces for ethnic foods in Britain, modified as ethnic grocery stores, vegetarian restaurants, and catering businesses, developing and expanding into strong supply chains and distribution networks, and shaped an ethnoscape. From these home enterprises, several brands have emerged, enterprises established, restaurant chains expanded, import-export businesses set up, allotments developed to grow local produce, and supply chains integrated. While agrarian and food related working practices become large scale, commercialise, and expand outwards, they often fade on the home front as the cognitive and

affective capacities to adapt and sustain them fade and dissipate amongst younger generations.

Just as working practices evolve from an agrarian past grows and fades in tandem with spatial changes, multiple types of practical competencies emerge and evolve from Belgrave's transition from an agrarian to industrial society. Landscape changes are marked by the gradual disappearance of rich, green lands, giving way to grey, grimy factories, cramped terraced housing, creaking sanitation and infrastructure which nevertheless belies the area's growing socio-economic vitality around the turn of the century. Factories big and small thrived, generating employment, exports, and developing affiliated service networks in the area and beyond. Money earned in the area was also spent in the area, and supported local businesses from butchers and greengrocers to pubs, working men's clubs, picture houses, and tea rooms.

Factory working involved great physicality and dexterity, an appreciation of machinery and tools, pride in working with hands, inventiveness and industriousness, practical understanding of problem solving processes, and common sense resourcefulness. Skills were mostly self-taught, the men becoming proficient not only in factory based manufacturing skills but also building, plumbing, masonry, electrical, and woodwork, and the women at food-related practical skills, cooking, sewing, dressmaking, and also accounting and administration. For a generation with little formal education they have formidable literacy and numeracy skills, undimmed by age.

Factory based working also fostered intellectual curiosity, personal satisfaction, and sensory engagement. These practices continued to survive through industrial decline and factory closures, adapted to various types of blue and white collar working, and continue to thrive well into retirement in many. For some others though work spaces and sites were locales of disconnect and disorientation, bodily connected to earning livelihoods but affectively distanced and self-excluded. In them these practices have waned, lost their physical, mental, and sensory moorings in work spaces, atrophied in skills and potential, engendered loss of self-esteem, and descended into violence, poverty, alcoholism, and ill-health.

When industrial growth and factory working was its peak, various social and leisure practices thrived alongside work in Belgrave's multiple spaces. Pubs, working men's clubs, tea rooms, and picture houses witnessed the flourishing of socialising practices, of building and sustaining relationships, networks, camaraderie, prudence, responsibility, citizenship, and the ability to enjoy life and live it to the fullest. They fostered personal, social, intellectual, and cultural enrichment, opened people up to new horizons and expanded geographies through adventure, travel, exploration, and holidays. When factories declined and native working classes moved away from the neighbourhood, political turmoil, dissonance around immigration, growing urban neglect and decline, impacted work and leisure spaces alike.

Once thriving working and socialisation practices now descended into social atomisation, alienation, compartmentalisation, and disconnection. Newer migrants preferred to internalise personal geographies, maintaining connections

with native homelands as memories, as recreated ritualised cultural practices, family connections, travel to homeland, overseas remittances, and eventually investment.

Changing nature of work and social practices also impacted on money management practices in place. Money was earned, distributed, and saved in factory cash tills, bus depots, railway stations, and engendered deeply ingrained habits of thrift, prudence, frugality, and sensibility, tactile sensory attachment to cash, and a sense of distrust and discomfort in invisible such as electronic cards. High street bank branches, post offices, and savings clubs formalised attachments, practices ritualised through savings, monthly overseas remittances, pension contributions, and investments, mediated by material artefacts like savings club leaflets, remittance booklets, passbooks, and vouchers. Some of those practices and spaces still thrive, while many others have disappeared, high street bank branches, money transfer shops, even grey spaces of illicit money remittances, just as saving, overseas remittance, tactile attachments to cash, and prudent attitudes to money management struggle to stay alive amidst the growing dominance of electronic money and a spending-oriented way of life.

Belgrave's landscape changed with industrial decline and gradual factory closures, albeit somewhat slowly and imperceptibly. Growing urban population, pressures on services and infrastructure, and a rapidly changing neighbourhood demographic wrought dramatic changes in work, money, and social practices concurrent with urban and social decline. Sites and spaces of work, leisure, and habits were in flux. Factories closed, pubs, clubs, and tearooms faded with thinning trade, railway line shut down, trucks, food carts,

and pie vans disappeared. In the post-industrial flux, neighbourhoods fragmented, waves of immigration frayed already loosening social ties, and Belgrave's rich tapestry faded. Practices changed as newer residents started to adapt, borrow, introduce, and re-establish new practices of work, livelihoods, money management, socialisation, and everyday living. Working was no longer convergent upon industrial sites and factories instead dispersing into trading, shop keeping, and family enterprises. Socialising spread out to suburbia, and on to overseas travel, while becoming more atomised, home-bound, culturally inscribed amongst some others.

The migration of East African Indians into the area effected noticeable changes in work and leisure practices in the area. Traditional work faded, declined and many moved away from factories into service work. New migrants catalysed a transition from industrial working to trading in the area by repurposing old factory spaces into shops, restaurants, newsagents, and such. Businesses and enterprises were slowly built up, neighbourhood housing expanded, and urban decline was arrested. Culturally inscribed businesses in food, fashion, and jewellery were built up alongside culture-neutral chemist, optician, newsagent, hardware store, and photo studio.

Money was funnelled into savings, property, business-cum-marriage alliances, and reinvestments. Leisure activities were largely confined to home but some socialisation practices spilled over into new communal spaces and places of worship, repurposed from old factories and warehouses. Traditional practices faded to be supplanted by new ones transplanted from different cultural and

geographical contexts. Pubs disappeared as did tea rooms, picture house, and working men's clubs, spaces denuded by the absence of working men's socialising ways. Social gatherings now largely happen at home, culture defended collectively or occasionally regressing into communal insularity. Decrepit community centres and public spaces collect the disconnected, alienated, abandoned, and lonely. The better established and networked ones socialise in shiny new community centres, places of worship, social clubs, and festive occasions. Boundaries between work, business, networking, socialising, and leisure become less demarcated, more fluid and tightly knit, as divisions between family, social, business, and money blur.

Tight knit communities mean tight control over family and business interests. Working, investing, money-managing, trading, socialising, networking, family connecting are all inseparable, interlinked, enacted in assorted sites and spaces. Canny business practices that built a prosperous, powerful community in and eventually caused its expulsion from East Africa, were transplanted into Britain, thriving and flourishing as resourceful entrepreneurialism and prudent fiscal management, to reposition the community as a shining example of migrant success story. Less visible but just as real though are some less savoury practices, social superiority, contempt for fellow migrants, exploitative methods including employing undocumented workers, paying cash wages, and poor employment conditions.

As the community grows in wealth and power, its members move away to affluent suburbia taking their work, business, and socialising practices elsewhere. As their physical presence in the area fades, unmistakable signs of

neglect and indifference appear on the streetscape. Property holdings reflect years of neglect, underinvestment and poor maintenance, grimy tenements that once housed family and friends now occupied by undocumented workers, managed by slum landlords. Trading practices have declined, business owners move away to concentrate on bigger investments, leaving behind the small shops that nurtured their fortunes to be managed by relatives, low-paid, and often exploited workers. The ethnoscape is a mirage that hides indifferent service, poor quality stock, enterprises struggling under indifferent and constantly changing management, thinning clientele base, rising business rates, and civic neglect.

Shops, residences, and social spaces are in constant flux as people move in and out of the neighbourhood more rapidly than before. Learned practices move away while new methods of work, life, and social enter, adapt, borrow, invent, and sometimes destroy existing ones. Newer migrants come in but don't stay as long as earlier ones. Some work. Some set up shops. Many float around on spurious welfare claims, existing in shadows, twilight spaces between illegal and illicit. New forms of socio-cultural practices, some vibrant, some acceptable, some others barbaric, reprehensible, yet normalised under religious ideology enter and thrive.

Practices of religious celebrations, prayers, and worship also change in relation to the changing social and spatial landscape. Sunday church attendance and choir singing is the first to decline in the area as it moves out along with the first flight of educated, white collared middle class professionals from Belgrave into affluent suburbia. Church going was not as strong amongst the working

masses. Churches were simply sites for formalising relationship rituals.

Religious adherence faded, congregations declined, Christmas became more about socialising and entertainment and less about church, sites of worship became more secular, faded, and gradually declined. Churches were revitalised with a new sense of religiosity with the arrival of Caribbean, Portugal, and other devout Christian migrants into Belgrave. Through intense, fervent, and richly textured social and communal practices churches were revived through congregations, song, worship, and feasting.

Non-Christian migrants struggled to establish their own sites of worship in contrast despite equal intensity of religious fervour and devotion, their prayer and rituals confined to sparse rooms and tenements. Prayer and worship practices continued nevertheless, using makeshift resources and repurposed material objects, spirituality separated from sacralised sites, and new spaces sanctified through makeshift religious practices. With the arrival of the East African Indian migrants, Hindu religious practices were revived and strengthened in Belgrave. Donations and community congregations helped repurpose old factories and warehouses as temples, their social clout brought in priests, professional prayer rituals, and network connections for celebrating festive and religious occasions, their shops and diaspora networks tapped into supply chains for importing authentic prayer artefacts, religious objects, and worship ingredients that textured prayer rituals with authenticity. Congregations thrived, and rejuvenated sites of worship became popular with visitors and residents. Simultaneously Christian communities and migrants started to move away, church congregations

dwindled, churches closed or were repurposed, and attendant religious practices slackened, withered, and died.

As Belgrave continues to undergo demographic changes, newer forms of religious practices and worship make their way in and attempt to survive alongside existing ones. Worshipful practices, religious fervour, and fealty to unseen gods are similar in intent, but wrap themselves around very different deities, spiritual objects, and culture-specific rituals. Concurrently new sites of worship are planned or contemplated, new deities wait to be appeased, new sites await fresh devotees.

Ways of celebrating and grieving change over time and Belgrave's spatial composition. They are carried out in private, at home, in contained makeshift prayer rooms, dank temples, quiet churches, or silent graveyards. Textured by religious piety, cultural affinities, social bonds, and sensory richness of authentic material artefacts, they flourish in homes, private spaces, community centres, makeshift halls, run down factories, and disused warehouses, spilling over into pubs, restaurants, and leisure spaces. The religious becomes secular, morphs into the cultural; culture turns social, and then public, and public monetises as commercial celebrations. Inherently private practices played out at home and communed in places of worship overflow into leisure and social spaces, into civic spaces like community centres, makeshift temples, and into public spaces of parks, streets, roads, and thoroughfares.

Celebratory practices gather together public, private, and commercial interests, a statement of collective cultural power enacted as public ritual, sometimes unmoored from spiritual anchoring and showcased as glitz,

glamour, sterile show over substance. Over time as intensity and commitment wane and enactors move away from sites of enactment, the proximal turns to distal, causing celebrations to dull and diminish. They materialise as weddings and festivals articulated as socio-cultural statements exemplified as conspicuous consumption, spawning and shaping a marketplace rife with opportunities. Grieving remains inherently discreet, enacted in private, shored up by family, friends, support networks and memorialised through material artefacts like cake recipes or graveyard headstones, or as spectral presences in lonely communal lunches or collective religious gatherings in makeshift temples.

Food-related practices, the shopping for, cooking, and eating, are shaped in private and public spaces in tandem with the affective intensity attached to them. Practices that grew out of food's inseparable connection to its agrarian birthing in Belgrave, have evolved through a series of socio-economic and spatial-temporal changes of industrialisation, depression, and war rationing to become disconnected and compartmentalised, and tinged with affective natures of hardship, frugality, and matter-of-factness. Food has meant bodily sustenance, basic, functional, and essential. In cramped terraced homes and bedsits, home kitchens are central to food and cooking; with improved lifestyles, shiny new kitchens and gadgets in new-build suburban evoked greater sensory pleasures than the food cooked in them. Food practices enacted outside the home sphere, in pubs and restaurants, becomes coloured by social enjoyment and leisure comforts. Food becomes social, practices enacted as social beings.

When socio-economic developments bring changes in the spatial landscape, the demographic shifts. Native residents move out, new migrants enter. Food practices now become central to life and living, sustaining memories, tangible, visceral connections to distant homelands, and deep spiritual needs. Food becomes a talisman, emotional crutch, and a symbol of resistance to new influences. Shopping for, cooking, and eating food exemplify the struggles of adapting to a new homeland, played out through spaces of damp tenements and terraced homes. Single burner stoves become material artefacts of resistance, shops are hunting grounds for native food ingredients, and a diaspora network channels the resistance army. From private homes and rooms to churches, communal centres, grocery stores, and eateries, eating becomes a gathering of memories, emotions, and senses, a central force that brings together sybarites and socialisers.

Food related practices also enshrine ideologies. Vegetarianism, a learned trait introduced into a new environment from lands far away, is enacted and sustained as great struggle, and disperses into far off lands through people. As a source of economic capital, it creates wealth through eateries and related businesses. It becomes symptomatic of power struggles on the streetscape, with planners for permission to open restaurants and lobby against opening of non-vegetarian outlets, with schools for serving vegetarian lunches and imposing cultural restrictions on youngsters who rebel. Food divides and connects through enactments at home, shops, stores, restaurants, eateries, public and civic spaces.

A range of other practices as everyday life events change in intensity and scope enacted through Belgrave's spaces, sites, and over time. Their affective

interaction blurs boundaries between commercial and altruistic, private and public, home and marketplace. They overlap, co-define, and co-create, feeding off one another. Commercial, retail, civic, public, and quasi-civic spaces take on interactive roles inseparable and indistinguishable from one another. Pubs, clubs, tearoom, and picturehouses sell food, drink, and entertainment alongside ideals of family life, social networks, camaraderie, and wider relationships. The market is dissected and disseminated here through discussions on the relative merits of ale and lager, and comparison deals on offers and bargain vouchers. Eateries, fashion stores, and jewellery shops sell artefacts and symbols of socio-cultural identity alongside shaping its underpinning ideological mores. Food ideologies are shaped and entrenched through eateries, exotica is packaged and sold in ethnic fashion stores in tandem with ideals of cultural modesty, and jewellery stores retail precious metal as ways of investing and consolidating family financial interests. Pharmacies dispense lifestyle, health, and wellbeing advice alongside prescription medicines. Weddings planned, photos taken, and modelling portfolios organised are navigations of cultural subtleties, conservative values protected and sustained. Even charity clothes shop dispense free savings and immigration advice.

If sites and settings of the typical marketplace sustain and catalyse cultural ideologies, then equally the marketplace is shaped and exchanges facilitated through civic and public spaces. Community and civic centres are repurposed as language centres and locales for art, music, and dance. Lessons are imbued with emotions, memories, sensory immersions, resonances and cadences of languages, rhythms, sounds, bodily performances of music and dance, and

driven by ambition and aspirations for augmented job prospects, professional opportunities, and travel adventures. Marketplace structures are enacted and shaped by a combination of formal and informal exchanges, lessons bought and paid for, teaching and volunteering opportunities, employment footholds gained, and opportunities exploited for the future.

Public spaces are equally active in directly and indirectly shaping the marketplace. Parks and green spaces in Belgrave were welcome lungs of clean air away from the polluting, dank environment of factories and tenements. Walking practices were exercises in physical activity, foraging for berries, and forging lifelong friendships, continuing decades on into retirement suburbia. Routines are created in these public spaces, life structures maintained and adhered to rigorously. Community centre habits and routines for chats, chants, prayers, Sudoku, bridge, and board games, as vigorously maintained as pub attendance, help alleviate ageing related loneliness and depression, and maintain mental health and cheeriness. Informal support and advice dispensed within these spaces disseminate pastoral care for those struggling with mental health issues relating to disability and sexual orientation. Daily routines and practices enacted in public and civic spaces encourage personal accountability in maintaining personal health, alleviates burdens on public healthcare, and supports proactive efforts in shaping people as self-organising healthcare customers.

Public and communal spaces are co-opted as marketplace sites by the entrepreneurial. Business networking, property alliances, savings and investment advice, and marketplace exchanges all happen in community

centres, dance halls, temples, and bus stops with equal vigour as they do in banks and money transfer service shops. Street food snack carts on lanes outside factories, under the stairs at Belgrave's old railway line, or money lending on bus stops are all creative ways of appropriating public spaces for market exchange. Even grey, dark, in-between, interstitial, and invisible spaces facilitate market exchange. Illicit overseas money transfers, undocumented workers, borderline illegal work practices, questionable employment conditions and residency status are all practices that bring together customer, supplier, and middlemen as unlabelled, illegitimate marketplace actors, in a thriving grey economy.

Celebrations and festivities are situated in public roads and parks, enshrining them as sites of social occasioning, communal gathering, and cultural identity enactments. In the process ethnoscapas and cultural spectacles are engineered, heritage memorialised, monetised, branded, packaged as visitor attraction. They revitalise the marketplace, attract footfall into the area, help local businesses, generate employment, stave off threats of demolition, and defy gloomy predictions of urban decline by somehow surviving and thriving despite odds.

Practices and place intersect and connect through tangible and intangible elements, market exchanges or intuitive connections, public or commercial spaces, cognitive or sensory engagements. Proustian sensory memories are enacted and recreated in public streets, roads, shops and other spaces, memorialised as fruit, vegetable, spices, incense, the smells and sights of connections. People travel to homelands, engage in assorted practices of cooking, investing, forming alliances and networks, to recreate and reconnect to

those memories and sensations just as much as they distance and disconnect from memories of dank, musty, damp, run-down tenements, grimy factory floors, putrid-smelling public baths, communal sanitation, septic tanks, acrid fumes of railway diesel, coal carts, and horse dung.

Through these constant intersections, things and people are searched for, found, lost, discarded, old lives are abandoned, new ones discovered and adapted, connections are missed, abjured, homelands forgotten, remembered, security, contentment, peace, and reconciliation forged and fragmented.

Practices help people stamp their imprint on place, claim and contest ownership through ideologies, behaviours, actions, and memories, a constant tussle shaded by degrees of realisation, affirmation, reinforcement, disappointment, disillusionment, and disenchantment. From major spatial landmarks like railway lines and flyovers which symbolise the changing nature of work-life practices to an assortment of public, private, and commercial spaces from streets, factories, neighbourhoods, to shops, cemeteries, and parks, a range of practices wax and wane, thrive, survive, and die in varying degrees of life and death.

When practices are enacted as bodily performances comprising of a range of affective engagements, people's affective contemplation, the corporeal, mental, and sensory engagements they bring to them, change in alignment with spatial-temporal dynamics, which affect the intensity with which practices are enacted. As affective engagements intensify or fade, practices too desiccate, die, fade into memory, or are replaced by new incarnations, and the place through and in which they are enacted also undergo changes. Body, self, practice, and affect are all interconnected in multiple dimensions which in turn are connected and linked to place. To understand practice and its affective shades is also to

understand the body's schemata or corporeal engagement within its spatial-temporal framework, the habitus which links the lived self and geographical self.

Contemplated together, they clarify the observational lenses that unpack the coeval relationship between body and self, place and self (Casey 1997) and help understand the conduct of human beings in place and place within one another (Thrift 1997, 2007). Place is memorialised and internalised within body, embedding and embodying one another, symbiotic, mutually imbricated concepts linked together (Casey 2001) not simply expressed as emotion or perceived as a transactional exchange between place and body but felt as an intense force that is a composite of actors, actions, processes, practices, body, objects, thoughts, and other activities (Anderson 2009, Duff 2010), shaped through interactions with the environment comprised of spatial-temporal dynamics and a range of political, material, technological, and infrastructural landscapes (Randles and Ward 2006). Through spatial-temporal dynamics, place and practices are in ceaseless motion, modifying one another. Practices perpetuate place which in turn lives on, morphs and changes through practices and its spatial-temporal settings.

II. **PROTEAN PRACTICES, TRANSCENDENTAL PLACE**

Practices in Performing Bodies

The mutable nature of practices and place can thus be perceived through their symbiotic interconnections, across component spatial-temporal elements.

Practices are mundane human actions, apprehended as bodily enactments, performed through a range of affective engagements of varying intensities.

They are tangible ways of perceiving the world through human and non-human formations, the processual register of everyday life experience, enacted through embodied movements, corporeal, emotional, and sensory engagements touching upon a range of phenomenological registers. Each of these registers vary in intensity and affect over time, impacting upon the potency and vigour of practices enacted, which are dependent upon and draw from physical energies, corporeal practicalities, ardour of emotional engagements, richness of sensory immersions, iridescence of colour spectrums, and possibilities of action-potential emerging from such registers. They are shaped by the body's dispositional orientation, pitch, tone, resonance, and action potential, and the nature and quality of interaction with spaces through which they are enacted, thus shaping place (Anderson 2006, 2009, Anderson and Harrison 2006, Bissell 2008, Clough 2007, Dewsbury 2000, Gumbrecht 2004, Massumi 2002, McCormack 2003, Stewart 2007, Thrift 2004, 2007).

Affective intensities of phenomenological engagements wax and wane through time. The corporeal changes from vigour, vitality to impotence, helplessness; emotions intensify from exuberance, effervescence to hopelessness, despair;

sensory immersions can enrich or denude, parched of colour and shade. As these intensities change, so do the nature of practices which in turn affect the action-potential of place (Spinoza 1989), shaping life possibilities. Affective registers and practices also change depending upon the nature of their interaction with the broader environment, its spatial-temporal framework, as one of the phenomenological registers (Thrift 2004, 2007). The performing body is the spatial vehicle, carrier of practices through the environment, intrinsically interlinked through the absorption of contexts and cues from a particular landscape which impacts upon practices, and in turn leaves leaving its imprint upon the environment through the impact of practices it carries as tangible and intangible remnants.

In the use of non-representation to examine landscape and body, neither are viewed as fixed, discrete, or delimitable concepts. Their interlinkages are interrogated through empirical contexts of practices, mundane, everyday living processes that document human experience as non-representation, without boxing them through the staticity of abstraction or symbolism or the dead geographies of representation (Thrift 2004, 2007). Practices link them materially and through their interactive capacities for action. They shape the conduct of humans and place with and in one another, outlining the geography of what and who happens.

Practices can thus be viewed as being concerned with the technologies of life, of being, an interactive congregation or assemblage of environment that brings together people, bodies, belief systems, structure, habitus, material objects, networks, spaces, and environment, as well as the various phenomenological

registers, and their action-potential (Anderson et al 2012, Anderson and McFarlane 2011, Deleuze and Guattari 2004, Latour 2004, Grosz 1995, Latham and McCormack 2004, McFarlane 2011, Swanton 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). By extension the human body carries and catalyses practices as containers of performances enacted in conjunction with the broader environment, material objects, and place, synchronous with spatial and temporal changes that happen processually.

Place as Gathering of Practices

Through an empirical interrogation of practices in the field site, the interlinkages between practices, body, bodily enactments, their affective engagements, and landscape, are gradually synthesised and progressively abstracted, their interconnectedness evolving, muting, and shaping the broader environment through space and time. By avoiding narrow symbolic reifications and the temptation to label practices through limiting social-static outcomes or deliberately aestheticizing them to create and interpret meaning, non-representation allows practices to be observed in the broader context of landscape, environment, and bodily affects in place. Together they are perceived as an atmosphere encompassing a broad spectrum of elements of body, mind, and environment (Howes 2005), a complex interchange of processes, people, actors, ideas, thoughts, material objects, and spectral presences.

Such an atmosphere is resonant of practices enacted within and their action-potential quality. It is formed as a socio-material assemblage of components

intricately linked together, and conceptualised as an affective atmosphere (Anderson 2006, 2009), which characterises the subjective moods of place. This atmosphere is textured by the intensity of practices, degrees of affective engagements and commitments that animate them, and perceived through elements of its spatial-temporal framework, form, structure, sites, locales, spaces, buildings, architecture, and moments of socio-historical contexts.

The composite of these elements cohere as place. It is a conceptual place suffused with atmosphere that mutates over time, carrying the varying dynamic affective intensities of its components, shaped through its sites, settings, and locales. It is interrogated empirically and analysed through practices which only come to life inasmuch as they are enacted and are apprehensible through particular space-time contexts. By examining practices as they are played out through sites and over temporal historical contexts, we begin to comprehend their fluidity and dynamism as enactments. Concurrently an emerging conceptualisation of place can be grasped as a composite of assorted spaces and temporal moments through which practices are enacted. By extension place comes to be apprehended as a composite whole which encompasses and is co-constitutive of its component elements, space and time.

In the field site as a conceptual place, practices can be examined as they are played out through various locales on the streetscape. These sites and settings are not uniform, architectural representations of life on the street. They range across multiple formats public, communal, and private to civic, collective, and commercial, and provide insights into practices enacted within. Working practices, means of earning livelihoods, and managing money would be devoid

of context without the innate understanding of how they play out across a variety of settings from factories, shops, banks, businesses, to homes, pubs, community centres, bus stops, public roads, flyovers, and railway lines.

Understanding socialising and living practices would be meaningless without the formative roles of pubs, clubs, picture houses, communal spaces, dance halls, civic centres, and public parks in shaping lifestyles, values, attitudes, and social roles. Practices of eating would have little granular richness without the catalysing effects of homes, kitchens, home enterprises, community centres, eateries, ethnic grocery stores, and restaurants that situate the role of food in people's lives.

Life's landmarks, highs and lows, are occasioned by celebrations and grieving which are inseparable from where they enacted, from homes, temples, community centres, dance halls, and shops to funeral homes, parks, public roads, cemeteries, and feudal manor houses. Spatial elements and non-descript locales like bus stops, roadside benches, and bylanes become equally significant in understanding the implications of work, money management, and assorted practices of forming alliances and networks as they are played out. An equally rich range of practices are enacted in grey, shadowy, and interstitial spaces. Not always visible to the neutral, unquestioning eye, these sites nevertheless are important locales for understanding how similar practices can take on different meanings and interpretations when enacted here.

As with spaces, practices also evolve and change over time. They do not remain static; their enacted forms and structures become unstable, their depth and density changing in relation to dynamic spatial and temporal potential, the

socio-cultural and historical environment. Shaped by people, their varying phenomenological registers, affective intensities, and degrees of commitment, practices flourish, thrive, effervesce, or wither, desiccate, decay, and die in tandem with the robustness of spaces and exuberance of times in which they are enacted. Practices constantly borrow from one another, adapt, change, mutate, and reinvent themselves as they play out through spaces and time.

The richness of practices are further illustrated by unpacking the nature of sites, settings, locales, time contexts, in which they are played out, the actions of people enacting them, and underpinning ideologies and sensibilities. Given the emerging conceptualisation of place as being co-constitutive of space and time and understanding the field site as one such empirically illustrative conceptual place, the assorted sites, settings, and spatial locales here perform and act as a backdrop to multiple functions. Training a defined marketing lens for observing and analysing them, it is evident that conventional marketplace functions are performed in retail sites, stores, shops, and business enterprises. These sites and spaces are servicescape settings, backdrops to the enactment of consumption and facilitation of marketplace exchanges (Booms and Bitner 1981) and as such resonate with their conventional understandings and interpretations in managerial sciences.

Products and services are bought and sold here daily, and marketplace interactions are negotiated through exchanges between buyers and sellers. Consumption is driven by shoppers and shopping, and sites function as servicescape settings facilitating market access of goods and services, as locales for distribution, thus fulfilling their managerial understanding of

marketing practice. From mundane everyday objects to artefacts used in special occasions, servicescape settings fulfil basic consumer utilitarian needs, shape and sustain their material attachments to possessions (Kleine and Baker 2004). The efficiencies with which they fulfil their marketplace roles changes over time depending on the robustness of their service and quality standards, strengths underpinning their distribution and supply chain networks, and the entrepreneurialism with which market opportunities are spotted and exploited.

At specific moments in time, these spaces and servicescape settings reproduce and extend habitus within structural contexts and institutional mechanisms. Consumer actions at those times can be interpreted as being shaped by habitus, extended pre-dispositions, and enactments of societal structures. Consumers are observed and interpreted as social beings through their actions (Chin 1998), and servicescape settings enable them to negotiate self-place identity (Bonees and Secchiaroli 1995, Dixon and Durrheim 2004). Shopper behaviour and attendant consumption can also be interpreted as identity projects as consumers engage in marketplace exchanges involving culture-specific material artefacts and services as individual and collective means of shaping and negotiating their ethnic (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy 2003) and socio-cultural identities (Rosenbaum 2005, Rosenbaum and Montoya 2007). In the process servicescape settings are turned into personalised communal and cultural spaces (Alexander 2003) mutually negotiated between marketer and consumer.

Some servicescapes dazzle and enchant through projected atmospherics, perceived by neutral observers as packaged exotica that showcases cultural

identity tropes, but the aestheticized atmospheres (Biel-Missal and Saren 2012, Chebat and Michon 2003, Turley and Milliman 2000, Venkatesh and Meamber 2008) are emergent naturally from the visual spectacle of the merchandise such as fashion and jewellery, rather than as a result of any overt marketer attempt to engineer the servicescape domain in order to subjugate and manipulate consumers. Perceptions of exotica and cultural glamorisation remain subjective depending on the viewing gaze. Consumption enactments within such settings are still predominantly functional and utilitarian rather than enchanted or spectacular.

The patina of cultural exotica from ethnic servicescape settings rub off on the streetscape, gradually transforming it into an ethnoscape (Appadurai 1997, 2001) a spatial articulation of collective socio-cultural identity. Culture and heritage enshrined in memory and nostalgia (Goulding 2000, O'Guinn and Belk 1989), are now monetised for collective economic advantages, commodified and transformed into market objects (Penaloza 1994, 2000, 2001). In the postmodern transition to a consumerist society and a growing obsession with spectacle, the street morphs from being a collection of servicescape settings into an object, commodity, branded and marketed for the visitor gaze (Urry 1990, 1995, 2002). Culture is now both produced and consumed simultaneously in site, repositioning it as landscape of symbolic economy (Zukin 1991, 1995, 1998). The streetscape remains positioned across porous boundaries separating the global and local, the locality eliding spatial-temporal distances (Harvey 1989, Massey 1984) to become enveloped into a specific historical identity.

The streetscape symbolises a branded ethnic neighbourhood with embedded social, cultural, and economic ties and networks (Light and Gold 2000, Pryor and Grossbart 2005, Rath 2000, 2006, Shaw 2011) but with an underlay of faux authenticity (Bryman 2004, Meethan 2001). Over time this exacerbates and deepens local alienation by reinforcing cultural stereotypes (Orbasli 2000, Shaw and MacLeod 2000) and struggles to remain enforced through changing power dynamics between stakeholders as the neighbourhood undergoes significant demographic changes through the ebb and flow of migrant communities. As commodity and objectified spectacle, site of cultural production and consumption, the streetscape becomes entrenched at the same time as it is perceived as liquid and fluid.

While managerial and marketing sciences have adapted to examinations of space as sites and settings of marketplace enactments, they provide fewer heuristic tools capable of interpreting actions and enactments when sites and spaces, settings and locales are not always specific to practices enacted within them. Sites and practices become inseparable, blurred, and indistinguishable from one another when their determined boundaries between commerce, marketplace, social leiscapes, and everyday life settings morph into one another, when practices overlap, taking on each other's form and function.

Retail settings and servicescapes in the form of assorted shops, businesses, enterprises, and stores, enact marketplace functions and mediate market exchanges while also providing important social, communal, and emotional pastoral care roles. They catalyse real and imagined, tangible and sensory connections, recreate homelands and geographies, support, sustain, and

navigate socio-cultural ideologies, norms, and conventions, and act as arbiters of values and beliefs. Retail settings perpetuate social and power relationships and networks, only some of which is captured through explanatory marketplace mechanisms. These settings perpetuate societal structures and institutional contexts while also mediating and catalysing agentic choices.

In parallel a wide range of social and leisure spaces including public, civic, and quasi-civic ones facilitate marketplace exchanges and mechanisms while fulfilling their primary roles as social settings. Alongside enabling vital emotional, social, and pastoral care roles, these spaces are important arbiters of values and ideals that shape people's lives as functional and productive beings. Within social and leisure spaces like pubs and clubs, marketplaces are dissected, compared, analysed, measured, and evaluated. Market mechanisms, exchanges, products, and services are evaluated, and consumer choices are shaped. People as formidably well-equipped carriers of knowledge and skills, act as market mavens, catalysing in-group and out-group behaviours, facilitating marketplace access to those on the margins and peripheries, and sharpen insider status for those already entrenched within the system. Marketplace boundaries are stretched and made more porous in order to accommodate those with no direct or legal access into the system while being facilitated to favour insiders. Information and knowledge is disseminated through evaluative practices which in turn shape a wider range of marketplace practices, from business, supply chains, and networks to properties, investments, and commodity markets both at home and overseas. These spaces facilitate family and social relationships and networks as indistinguishable and inseparable from professional and business ones.

Even within leisure spaces where people congregate in collective, communal gatherings to relax, bond, negotiate social camaraderie, and commemorate life's landmark moments through eating, praying, celebrating, and grieving, marketplace mechanisms are subtly negotiated and agentic statuses reinforced. These directly and indirectly shape the marketplace by illuminating gaps in the market, highlighting market opportunities and market actors rife for exploitation, to be co-opted into the dominant logic of market capitalism. Managerial sciences offer little support for a deeper examination of these interpenetrative roles of sites, settings, and practices enacted in them.

Examining public, collective, and civic spaces and practices enacted within them offer even greater complexity in the field site. As key settings for shaping collective good, these spaces are vital for aggregating emotional, sensory, and corporeal affections that animate people's personal socio-cultural and environmental contexts. These spaces are tasked with a range of physical, environmental, and socio-symbolic roles but in addition also embody sacred, higher order values (Montgomery 1995). Amidst these, these spaces, from private homes to community centres, park benches, bus stops, railway stations, cemeteries, temples, and churches, sites and settings are also ripe with enterprise and entrepreneurial possibilities. Co-opted into the marketplace unwittingly, inadvertently, or with deliberate forethought, they become surprising sites for a spectrum of marketplace actors and actions, many of them shadowy, illicit, and often illegitimate, who gather here to participate in and perpetuate the marketplace. These spaces unwittingly incubate enterprises that go on to flourish as established businesses, allow people with varying degrees of power

and legitimacy in the marketplace to come together and find one another, establish and consolidate networks whose social and commercial boundaries are inseparable, and facilitate channels of communications and flows across material objects, architectures, people, and practices (Carr et al 1991, Czarnowski 1982, Gehl 1996, Moughtin 1999).

Pastoral roles that are seen as the domain of public, communal, and civic spaces often straddle the public-private-commercial arena (Akkar Ercan 2007) in the ease with which they facilitate and perpetuate the marketplace. Rhetorical discourses are often fearful about the growing corporatisation of public spaces (Jack 2016) and perceived encroachment of marketplace and commercial interests into them (Boyer 1993, Loukaitou-Sideris 1988, Punter 1990). While public welfare sentiment may underpin the need for clear divisional boundaries between private and collective, public and commercial (Clarke and Bradford 1998, Cook 2008), the marketplace has ways and means of finding its own nooks and crannies into public spaces just as public, pastoral, and communal roles inch their way into crowded commercial market exchanges. Public and civic spaces are also visible means of enacting power ideologies through the relative negotiating positions of stakeholders. They are articulated as tangible spatial architectural elements such as flyovers and railway lines, become strategic planning instruments in shaping and marketing localities (Madanipour 2000) and extend themselves into spectacular commodities that are shaped territorially but consumed fluidly as branded packaged objects.

Practices are thus played out through sites and settings and over time, performed as bodily enactments carrying phenomenological registers of varying

affective intensities. They interact with spatial and temporal dimensions, with socio-cultural contexts and the historical environment, change and morph and in turn change the dimensions and contexts they interact with. Using the ideological lens of the marketplace to observe, analyse, and interpret practices however becomes a delimiting exercise as there are insufficient heuristic tools to capture and explain the complexities of practices as they are enacted in and shaped through place, its multiple spaces and time.

Practices are not enacted in isolation. They are neither hermetically sealed in discrete spatial bubbles of sites, settings, and servicescapes, nor are they preserved in temporal aspic to be viewed as static snapshots. Practices are not simply aesthetic or spectacular actions viewed through marketplace exchanges or the dominant logic of marketplace capitalism. The predilection of marketing and managerial sciences to analyse marketplace structures and settings and consumer actions and interactions independent of one another is an attempt to reify them into existing methodological paradigms of positivism or interpretivism or explain them through pre-determinate structural labels or cultural tick boxes. Some recent calls in marketing address the need to examine the intersections of marketplace structures, sites, its dimensions, and consumer actions (Hirschman et al 2012, Miller 2007, Penaloza 2007, Sherry 2000) but these calls are still grounded in the commercial logic of the marketplace, far distanced from their philosophical and social sciences moorings (Belk 1975, Frenzen and Davis 1982, Lynch 1982, 1983).

Practices flow. They are fluid across spaces, settings, servicescapes, interstitials, temporal dimensions, moments, and contexts. They are not

consistent and unchanging. They influence, imitate, borrow from, and sometimes destroy one another. They evolve in relation to rhythms of the environment enacted in and through bodily expressions and are differentiated through the qualities, intensities, and degrees of affective commitment underpinning them. Marketplace lenses are cartographic, static, and ahistoric. They view practices as isolated enactments in discrete spatial settings or as actions captured in snapshots of time. They overlook the essential processual nature of practice and its fluidity as it shapes place.

Spaces are neither dependent nor entirely bound to practices enacted within them. They are not defined by actions carried out within them nor by labels assigned to them. Nor are they syncopated to voyeuristic activities happening within them. They are repurposed and reconsidered over time depending on the creative resourcefulness and affective engagements that people bring to them. Similarly practices do not colour specific moments in time, nor do they label activities as particular enactments in specific chronological order. To observe spaces as they are, as static entities and settings and backdrops of actions to observe enactments of practices is to decontextualize them just as to synonymise them as snapshots, as actions specific to moments in time is to denude them of colour and vitality. To cast space and time in envelopes of history, as enactments of identity in the mould of pre-determined socio-cultural lenses are to remove them from their broader socio-philosophical moorings.

Training marketplace lenses to observe practices is also ontologically skewed in the context of how place is considered in relation to space and time. Place has no ontological standing of its own in managerial gaze. It is relegated to a sub-unit of, or worse, synonymised with space. An ontological reductionism

relegates place to its component element of site and setting, a spatial cartographic entity devoid of historicity or processuality. Introducing a phenomenological sensibility allows the ontological hierarchy of place in relation to space and time to be repositioned and place as an abstracted concept to be perceived through space and time as its co-constitutive elements. Space and time become conceptual scaffoldings that allow the abstraction of place to be grasped. They act as entry points to the quest of perceiving place, not static or rigid containers, but temporary cages that hold together and mould practices in a loose embrace, and in turn be embraced and moulded.

Space and time are simply appendages that are constructive and representative of place, the larger, more universal concept. Place is perceived as a conceptual abstract but and real entity beyond its immediate cartographic coordinates, spatial and temporal frameworks. In the empirical context, even in a field site that offers little consensus in its geographical coordinates or specific territorial dimensions, and even less agreement in how it is perceived and represented by people who live and have lived through it, its sites and spaces offer an empirical ethnographic foothold and navigational directions to examine practices in spatial settings, just as cognisance of temporal snapshots helps structure the place as a longitudinal process, situating it within changing socio-historical and cultural contexts, and the historical environment. Through this immersive ethnographic process, a sense of place emerges, as an entity, an abstract but also tangible concept that can be perceived through and beyond its spatial-temporal components, observed, felt, perceived, and understood through dynamic, changing, mutating practices.

This perception empirically buttresses a claim for reversing the extant positional hierarchies of space versus place, a hierarchy entrenched in the thinking of space as the universal abstract construct synonymous with territory and place as a derivative outcome carved out of space. This relationship that is dismissed as 'contrived genealogy' (Casey 1993, 1997), a meaningless attempt to cleave history from geography. It lends credence to a more spiritual, cosmological, and philosophically grounded relationship that reverts this ontological hierarchy and reconfigures place as a universal abstract and as a phenomenological place 'lived' and experienced.

This conceptualisation or rather reconceptualization is underpinned by a cognisance of habitudes and practices and emphasises the consideration for place to be considered the universal and for both space and time to be seen as co-constructs contained within place. The lack of consensus around the field site's specific geographical coordinates, the inability to comprehend it as a territorially contained entity even when its history, presence, and effect is very perceivable and evident in people's lives, makes it an example of what Casey (1997) suggests is an unsited place with special non-geometric properties and virtues. The place is an example of the *idiolocal*, an embodiment of *idios kosmos* that is perceivable to each through their own personal practices and affect shaped in and through it. Place brings together space and time, is more than the sum of all its sites and settings and older than the entirety of its chronological existence.

Place is now perceived as being constructive of space and time as co-related concepts, a universal concept that is not fixed or welded to location, is porous, flexible, and mutable but still perceivable. Practices enacted are shaped as bodily performances, influenced by affective intensities, shaped, coloured, and textured by affective engagements and assorted phenomenological registers. Practices are also influenced by their interactive engagements with space and time, spatial sites, settings, locales, temporal contexts, historical environment, and the overall spatial and temporal framework they are enacted in. Since space and time is co-constitutive of place, we can now begin to examine the interactions of practice and place.

Place can now be viewed as a gathering mechanism of practices as bodily enactments, the movements of bodies as spatial vehicles, as carriers of processes, actions, thoughts, habitus, affects, sensations, and assorted phenomenological registers, that also holds together the nature, intensity, and degrees of commitment enacted by practices within spaces and temporal dynamics and rhythms. Places are perceived as affective atmospheres, a gathering assemblage of practices enacted within and can now be examined for the quality of their interpenetrative influences upon one another.

Texture, Somatography, Eventuation

As practices imbued with dynamism and processuality are gathered in place, they texture place in a constant ceaseless motion with their effects. When practices are intensified by affect and the richness of enactment and potential within, the resultant formation is a thick place, a place memorialised and

embodied by action, affect, sensation, emotion, and lived experience. Place becomes a fertile, febrile thrum of human potential and feeling, gathering within its embrace a sumptuousness of socio-material atmospheres replete with people, objects, actions, memories, discourses, and processes. A thick place optimises opportunities for personal enrichment by heightening the intensities of emotional and affective engagement and deepens people's lived experiences and connections to place. It is also reflective of vibrant socio-historical contexts and are perceived by the richness of its spatial and temporal dynamics.

By contrast when practices deteriorate and disintegrate, when affective engagements, sensations, and emotions that hold them in place are in attrition, and when action potential decays, the result is a thin place, one devoid of human potential and imbued with a sense of hopelessness. A thin place becomes brittle and depleted of human agentic essences. It lacks rigour and substance and provides insufficient fecundity for potential and action to bond people to place (Casey 2001, Duff 2010). It attenuates with emaciated socio-historical contexts and people exodus. Thick and thin places are social, spatial, and temporal. Juxtaposed in spatial and temporal contexts places can project an aesthetic vibrancy as thick places and can be perceived by the outside world as symbolic of success, growth, and vibrancy.

Thick and thin places are empirically examined in the field site through a socio-historic environmental perspective. At different points in its socio-economic history, it has by turns and simultaneously, been a thick and thin place. Its high points are marked by having been a throbbing medieval settlement, fertile, bountiful agrarian land, a thriving hub of industrialisation, and a vibrant ethnoscape. It thickens with fluctuations of time, certain days of the week or

seasons in the calendar or transitions in history. The thickness of place is evidenced by the fertility of practices enacted in them, the potential for work and earning livelihoods, economic vibrancy, social effusion, teeming demographics, the effervescence of celebrations, and proficiency of action potential. It is evidenced by spatial and temporal frameworks from celebrations to paydays, from festivals to communal gatherings, and are memorialised in a range of sites from factories, shops, enterprises to public spaces, parks, roads, and civic centres, which themselves are repurposed, reused, and reborn with changing practices.

By contrast it has also thinned and attenuated during times of population exodus, pestilence, recession, urban decline, and when faced with threats of demolition, factory closures, unemployment, and social unrest. The attenuation is evidenced in neighbourhood changes, demographic upheavals, movements of people in and out, decline, poverty, crime, hopelessness, disorder, arson, riots, flux, boarded up windows, graffiti, rundown tenements, and haunted manor houses. Changing nature of practices and their affective intensity, results in ebbs and flows in place, imbuing it with varying textures at varying times.

More importantly, texturing of place is not always even. Thick and thin places are not cyclical nor are they homogenous. They can happen simultaneously and in parallel. They can be perceived as thick and thin, as places of hope and optimism at the same time that they are seen as spaces of disorientation, alienation, and loneliness. Affection and disaffection of and with place can sit side by side. The disparities emerge from the differences in individual, bodily,

and sometimes collective phenomenological sensitisation, the intensity of affect and underlying self which shapes one's affective engagement with place, a 'concernful absorption' with place (Casey 2001). This sense of absorption shapes each person's perception of fecundity (Duff 2010) and contemplation. Places can feel enlivened and moribund at the same time.

Individuals however are not entirely enfeebled by thin or non-robust places. They become responsive to fading potential and shape their responses accordingly, become resourceful and making a virtue of their circumstances. They compensate for the loss of emotional engagement and affect by supplementing other aspects of affective engagement such as corporeal enactments and sensory immersions. The dullness of blue collar work and harshness of factory environment is compensated by activities that engage emotion, happiness, and intellect in social spaces like pubs and clubs, public places like parks, and through travel. When place loses familiarity and causes disorientation through demographic changes and immigration, a move to suburbia restores equanimity by regrouping and re-establishing home amidst people with shared backgrounds.

Feelings of alienation and disorientation, loneliness and abandonment, and emotional disconnect are mitigated by intense corporeal enactment of work practices, excessive attachments to talismanic connections of religion, food, and familiar cultural practices even if they are isolationist by nature.

Upheaval, loss of homelands and tangible symbols of prosperity are offset by robust attachments to cognitive representations of success, appropriation and somewhat parochial, regressive adherence to culture. Fading attachments to

tradition, culture, and religion is bolstered by unhealthy attachments to its meaningless symbolisms and rituals.

A variety of affective registers shape responses that can be perceived as an added affective dimension to 'making do'. These are elaborated by narratives of practices (De Certeau 1984) that examine the uses of makeshift resources including material objects, competencies, abilities, motivations, group behaviour, and structural influences in how people make sense of spaces through personalised idiosyncratic experiences and makeshift techniques. Practices here are viewed from affective standpoints and bodily phenomenological engagements and unlike De Certeau's narrative, focus on place as an ontological construct and not space as a spatial and territorial representation.

People bring a measure of inventiveness and resourcefulness in the way they negotiate the trialectics of lived, perceived, and conceived spaces (Lefebvre 1991) but practices are less concerned with symbolisms and representations of space, while enactments of ideology are effected through practices and not imposed by planners and authorities. Ideology is sustained and negotiated by Foucauldian power relationships and the modification of in-group and out-group behaviours, some ideologically compliant, some resistant, some subversive and transgressive (Cresswell 1996a, 1996b).

In affective engagements, the individual self's response to thickness and thinness of place is shaped by an attendant adjustment in the enactment and intensity of varying phenomenological registers. This enables the self to connect

to and intensely engage with a thick place at the same time that it optimises the self's potential to flourish and thrive in a disembodied thin place, the *compensatory logic of loss* (Casey 2001). Thick and thin places are divergent ontologies and result from varying textures of place by practices underpinned by an attendant variation in intensities of affective engagement, from enrichment and emphasis to banalisation and decay. Textures of practice affect textures of place and place mutates in rhythm to changing intensities in practice.

When place and practice texture one another, they are interlinked in a mutual web of flux and dynamism. Practices change form and shape and affective flex when they are enacted in place through its multiple spaces and sites over time.

Practices though are not entrenched in geography nor are they rooted to place. They take on a protean quality as they adapt to spatial and temporal environments and contexts. Practices do not take place in a hermetically sealed bubble. They borrow and adapt from one another freely, drawing from affective intensities, corporeal engagements, and sensory stimuli. They are animated by particular socio-historic and cultural contexts and movements in historic environment, but are mobile as contexts change.

As bodily enactments, the genotype and phenotype of practices evolve as people carry with them, their imprints etched as memories, habits, routines, and ideologies as they move within and sometimes away from environment. Practices are transplanted into fresh soils, new geographies, are textured by different affective intensities, fertilised by new affective engagements, and enervated by new socio-cultural contexts. They shade perception of new

places as thick or thin and shape their affective responses accordingly through forming new affinities and affiliations.

When they remain in place, they linger, leave their imprints behind, are adapted, modified, and sometimes destroyed by other practices or are embedded as learned and remembered behaviours. From thrifty practices of money management, frugality, resourcefulness, and creativity in making do with available resources, to shaping social responsibilities and neighbourliness, from affinities to walking in parks or adherence to vegetarian food ideologies, from inherited skills of cooking to remembered practices of cultural celebrations, practices adapt, change, morph, evolve, and move across geographies and places. Many practices were born or were shaped in place and flourished here. Many other practices shared universal genetic material with those enacted elsewhere and everywhere. Some others were transplanted into here and introduced anew. Practices move through environments and geographies through people, through imprints, which are then recreated and repurposed elsewhere. They flow, carrying with them the genetic imprint of place as a genomic and catalysing factor.

Places similarly exhibit a dynamism in accordance to changing practices. They are mutable, porous, flexible but comprehensible, perceived beyond their immediate spatial and temporal changes. They are affected by the density of practices and the texture of the sites and spaces in which they are enacted. Place gathers practices in a continual processual endeavour. Its sites and settings become platforms and backdrops for enactment of practices, its spaces and time contextualising bodily enactments that people create or bring

in from elsewhere. The affective atmosphere in place shapes affect, sensation, and other registers that animate practice.

Practices are born, they are adapted and flourish in place. They also arrive from elsewhere, carrying different genetic imprints of other places but are fertilised in place, shaped by extant affective registers, mutating and adapting to their new environment. Place in turn is shaped and constantly reimagined through these gathered practices. It loses old practices, rejuvenates some, and adapts some others. It transitions from an agrarian site where life is marked by seasons, shaped by land, and measured in grain, to one where life, money, and food is monetised by the factory shop floor. It shapes new ways of working, earning livelihoods, and earning money. It loses conventional practices of commemorations, celebrations, and social rituals and takes on new ways of celebrating, grieving, working, and eating, through movements of people.

Place is also not static. It does not remain stagnant and unchanging. It impacts upon practice as practices are carried around elsewhere. It leaves its genetic imprint on the way people work, shape their lives, and mark life's moments as they move away into suburbia or rural solitude, into bustling cosmopolis or overseas lands. It lives on as trace memories in practices in other places just as much as it takes on traces of other places within. Place is transcendental and not trapped in geography just as much as practices are protean, uncaged in space or site or time.

Place gathers. It is a gathering process, a ceaseless, constant wave of outgoing and incoming movements related to self and practice, as it amasses a

continually evolving set of practices as enactments. Practices texture place, they engage actively with other body encounters and experiences, with places and their resonances just as much as they take on practices from elsewhere. They morph, evolve, and texture place with their enactments. Similarly place gathers practices, embodies them, shapes habitual experiences, and accompanies practices as it moves elsewhere.

Practice as bodily enactments and place as a gathering of practices internalise and externalise each other, make one another. They exist in a symbiotic, synergistic relationship, a dynamic concatenation that see thick places dissipating and dissolving and thin places thickening. They form and structure habitus as a link between lived self and geographical self, complementary concepts not treated as separate but linked in their material relatedness and emergent capacities to act and interact. It is a perpetual shaping, etching, and mutual inscription of and imbrication into one another, a somatography that resonates as a *forever going out to meet the place-world* and constant *ingression of the place-world* (Casey 1993, 1997). It evidences the reconciliation of the perpetual dialectic of hestial and hermetic modes of *being in place* (Casey *ibid*). Place emerges as a sinuous, fluid aggregation of constantly evolving practices.

Conceptualising Place

Practices and place thus shape and texture each other with their affects, intensities, and mutually impactful interactions in a somatography of being. Through the lens of this ceaseless movement and analyses of practices, we

return to viewing place as the central unit of observation and contemplation, a concept that is both emergent and evolving in its perpetual mutation, dynamism, and change. Place now becomes apprehensible as a socio-ecological occurrence that involves and is comprised of affect, phenomenon and its various registers, that is shaped in and through a continually textured atmosphere. It involves socio-geological and ecological timescales (Lorimer 2006, Massey 2006) and encompasses an assortment of socio-cultural and historical-environmental contexts, thus reuniting history and geography instead of artificially cleaving them (Casey 1993, 1996). Place is perceived as an outcome of eventful processes, happening as an event, and observable through a set of constantly shape-shifting practices. In its abstraction place is a universal that subsumes both space and time as evolving, changing, and co-constituting elements.

Place happens. It takes place. Place is an object internalised through affect and externalised through action-potential. It is made and unmade through everyday life practices. It is embodied by affect, its changing intensities, gradations of action-potential, and is expressed through human agency, actors, materialities, processes, social interactions, sites, and settings. In its path dependencies and path plasticities, its texture, affect, bodily enactments, perceptions, and embodiments, through its practices and performances, in and out of its spatial remnants, architectural standings, archaeological slices, and temporal dynamics, place is dissected, reconstructed, mutated, contested, lived, practiced, produced, and consumed. Perceived as an embodied view of life and nature, place is embedded through simultaneous and concurrent incoming and outgoing processes and shaped through them. Place is an event. It eventuates.

The ontological fixity of place is further defined by contextualising it against the broader phenomenological understandings of the systemic of consumption. By situating the contemplation of place within the wider remit of consumption, rather than as a self-contained construct, the ontological, epistemological, and axiological position of place is clarified in sharper detail.

Historically, consumption as a process has been addressed predominantly within social and applied social sciences as a subset of domains of production (Marx and Engels 1970). Functionally and conceptually, consumption sits within production, analysed and interpreted as an indicator of social standing, a barometer of measuring the distribution of socio-economic resources (Bourdieu 1984), and an exercise in perceiving socio-economic organisation. Through such categorisations it becomes possible to understand socio-spatial consumer divisions (Bergson 1998) and how power relationships materialise within such socio-economic contexts (Veblen 1994). Throughout modern disciplinary discussions of social sciences, consumption has been subsumed under the domain of production, to serve the needs of the latter, symbolising its tangible outcomes.

With the postmodern turn in social sciences, disciplinary understandings have been shaded by the decline of mass industrialisation and the collapse of dichotomous relationships between consumption and production. This shift witnesses the emergence of consumption as a socio-systemic concept in its own right. (Douglas and Isherwood 1979). Understanding consumption becomes central to understanding society, as it offers certainty and stability in

the face of a disorienting, fragmented world, and provides reassurance those who feel caught between forces of structure and order on the one hand and the temptations of liberation, desire, and enchantment promised by the postmodern world on the other.

Consumption becomes the machinery and platform through which social reproduction is played out in a world that merges spectacle, aesthetics, and experience (Debord 1977, Benjamin 1999). Consumption now inverts and overturns its erstwhile supplicant status vis-à-vis production and now becomes the latter's role model, thus moving from the periphery to the centre of systemic contemplation (Styhre and Engberg 2003). In the process, consumption becomes co-opted as an interpretive platform for ideology, a triumphal statement of capitalism's inexorable march around the world as it establishes and consolidates the power and tenets of a materialistic society. Consumption offers the teleological structures with which to comprehend market capitalism.

At the heart of consumption now is the human actor, permanently cast in the role of a consumer, a marketplace actor, who fulfils their agentic role and destiny through consumption-related activities that can only be shaped, analysed, and interpreted through marketplace logic. Their actions and enactments become valid only inasmuch as they are contemplated through the lens of marketplace ideologies and the dominant logic of capitalism. By extension, observations of where such consumption behaviours are enacted only become apparent by an examination of the spaces of consumption which are now reconstituted erstwhile spaces of production. Consumption becomes an enactment of spatial practice, as a colonising space (Benjamin 1999) that

takes over sites and settings for catalysing marketplace actions. Spaces, sites, and settings now become social and cultural spaces because they constitute sites where consumer culture and the consumerist society plays itself out.

Conversely socio-cultural spaces also become spaces of consumption under the relentless onslaught of consumerism and the encroachment of the material society into every aspect of life, co-opted inexorably within the domain, structures, and mechanisms of the marketplace.

Consumption spaces and settings are now aestheticized sites of spectacle and enchantment, the visible articulations of a spectacular society (Debord 1967, 1977) given over to the commodified, fetishized worship of image, symbolism, and identity (Baudrillard 1988, 1994, Boorstin 1992). With growing objectification and intensifying symbolism, consumption spaces are produced, packaged, symbolised, and represented through marketplace activities of identity formation, and the consumer-actor as human agent becomes relevant only for the symbolic adequacy of consumption activities they participate in (Bauman 1988, Giddens 1991), typically understood as shopping and related marketplace behaviour. Consumption becomes an aspirational goal, and the setting an aesthetic resource that is co-opted and appropriated in the quest for an identity project.

This intensification of symbolism, privileging of identity, aestheticization, fetishisation, and dominance of representation only results in making the ontological status of consumption more nebulous and less certain, resulting in a loss of ontological facticity, which in turn constrains their theoretical

consolidation, and skews extant scholarship through heavily speculative theories (Warde 2005).

Only a deliberate move away from the dominant logic of the marketplace allows a more syncretic concept of consumption to emerge, an idea that is as embracing of a broad, rich, all-encompassing phenomenological sensibility as it is defiant in being neither restricted to nor defined by market exchange, or being reduced to demand (Warde 2005). This type of thinking introduces an element of processuality in the contemplation of consumption and all its constituent elements from actors to spaces. It is seen neither as a static outcome or an instrument of identity creation, neither separated nor isolated from production. Consumption becomes a form of production in itself. It is shaded and coloured by its ungraspable fragmentation, tangible evidence, clandestine ruses, which become visible and constitutive through not only materialities but also a range of processes and practices (Barthes 1983, De Certeau 1984). Consumption rarely occurs in pure forms for its own sake; it becomes instead both a conduit and a reason to channel its multiple practices.

As a natural consequence, practices become central to the understanding of consumption and constitute a valid empirical epistemological heuristic to examine consumption rather than as a simple search for the answer to the question of what consumers do. Practices refocus on human actors and phenomenological bodily enactments, but rather than restrict views of human actions to those that can be interpreted by the marketplace, practice theories examine the human body as the nexus of everyday practices affected by a range of phenomenological registers. They are comprehended

through non-instrumentalist notions of conduct, capturing the onflow of mundane, everyday life (Thrift 2007) and are an integral part of every sphere of life in the way they embody affect (Harvey et al 2001). Through this contemplation, practice theories (Reckwitz 2002, Schatzki 1996, Warde 2005) valorise ordinary, everyday aspects of life in the use of non-representational methods. Consumption comes to be understood through the social processes of how practices create and reproduce themselves rather than through outcomes of materialities of possession objects (Brownlie and Hower 2011, Echeverri and Skålen 2011, Murphy and Patterson, 2011, Shove and Pantzar 2005, Watson and Shove 2008). By observing practices we comprehend consumption as not always a coherent or unified whole but as a perceived object that occurs in and through its dispersed practices that is residual as *a moment in almost every practice* (Warde 2005).

While consumption is perceived through practice, practices are understood through the settings within and through which they are played out. Settings here not in the sense of fixed cartographies or 'dead geographies of representation' (Thrift 2007). They are polysemic, heteroglossic, fluid spaces (DeCerteau, Girard, and Mayol 1988). These spaces are neither static nor bounded in cartography (Clifford 1997) but constitute an itinerary comprising a series of encounters. Events. Happenings. Place. Conceptual and abstract place as universal, that is constitutive of space and time as component elements, that occurs as events and happenings, and that textures and is in turn textured by practices, the latter allowing for consumption to be comprehended as an object. Accordingly it becomes possible to conceptualise,

and theorise place as an object of consumption, an object that is formed, shaped, and affected by practice.

Place is both object and phenomenon, product and process, outcome and cause of consumption inasmuch as consumption itself is a practice that is residual in place. It is an object of contemplation that is apprehended even as it occurs and is made in practice and every moment of practiced enactment.

Place is comprehended through non-instrumentalism and non-representation of its genomic activities and practices, the non-staticity of its temporal dimensions, the non-architecturality and aspatiality of cartographic settings but is perceived, lived, experienced, and embodied through affect, sensation, self, body, moments, and emotions across a range of practices and enactments.

Conceptualising place as an object of consumption through the processuality of practices, introduces the elements of fluidity and dynamism into both place and practices. Place is viewed as a fluid, unsited, dynamic ontology captured and conceptualised through practice and affect. Affect clarifies epistemic treatments and is deployed as a tool of ontological construction while practice is understood as the mechanism that shapes affect and affective atmospheres, thus forming a heuristic lens with which to examine place. The resulting conceptualisation strengthens the philosophical and phenomenological reasoning behind how the materiality of the real world can be contested while simultaneously problematizing the materiality of conventional social sciences thinking in understanding and comprehending place (Law and Urry 2004, Thrift 2006), and by extension contesting and questioning the articulations and

expressions of place in managerial sciences as cartographic, ahistoric spaces of consumption.

By resituating and revisiting the ontological hierarchy of place and space, and repositioning space and time as constitutive elements of place which is now considered the universal abstract, place can be viewed as both process and product of place-world through consumption. It provides a much needed underpinning for developing not only ontological and epistemological but also theoretical, conceptual, and praxeological explanations of place. Examining place as a renewed ontology also strengthens calls for inviting further philosophical contemplations of consumption as a phenomenon through which place is situated, perceived, and understood.

VI: CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

This concluding chapter wraps up this research study by recapping its journey towards theorisation and conceptualisation, and (partly) addresses the last of the remaining study objectives, to (e) validate the resituated place ontology and its hierarchy within consumption. The chapter highlights some theoretical, methodological, and axiological contributions arising from the study, and outlines implications for further scholarly research and investigation.

Research Aims and Objectives

This study has sought to theoretically interrogate “place” as an object of consumption in marketing from a practices standpoint that will proffer not only a new theoretical conceptualisation but also resituate and empirically validate its ontology and hierarchy vis-à-vis space and time. To help achieve this aim, the study develops a series of objectives, each of which are progressively addressed through its various chapters. To start with, the study reviews extant place treatments and its contextualisation within marketing domains and then ventures outside to borrow liberally from interdisciplinary allies to critique the ontological composition and fixity of place as a construct as seen in marketing. The review situates place as more than just sited geography and argues for a more processual and practiced examination of place that can be represented beyond symbolism, and frames this argument within a theoretical ground of a gap in extant scholarship.

The study follows this up with an empirical interrogation of place using ethnographic methods as both outcome and process of placemaking practice. The methodological adaptation of conventional street ethnography, empirically demonstrates the validity of practices and non-representational methods as observational, analytical lenses to study place, and ethnographically frames and illustrates place in the process of being practiced and created. Through this ethnographic, empirical illustration place emerges as a geographical, virtual, imagined, and metaphorical construct perceived beyond its spatial contours and temporal dimensions as an object shaped and consumed in and through its various practices. Through this the study theorises and conceptualises place as an object of consumption shaped and formed in and through practices. Further the study empirically validates the argument of place as being co-constitutive of space and time as its component elements, thus resituating their respective hierarchies and emphasising place as the universal ontology in consumption.

Findings and Implications

Many implications can be derived from this study which contributes to extant place discourses both methodologically and theoretically through the framing of place as an object of contemplation and problematizing its ontology and epistemology from multiple theoretical, methodological, and axiological standpoints. The study broadens units of observation and analysis and draws from several disciplinary understandings of place, consumption, practice theories, non-representational methods, and ethnography.

Through the ethnographic study, the field site emerges as the place that is conceptualised as the object of consumption shaped in and through practice. The field site can be read and interpreted as a geographical site, a collection of assorted retail sites and settings, an urban neighbourhood shaped through ebbs and flows of people and socio-historic contexts, a packaged and marketed brand commodity, a memorialised, imagined site layered through people's lives, and a virtual place that is portable and transmutable through people and their actions. The site is grasped and perceived beyond its immediate spatial and temporal dimensions as one that is shaped and in turn shapes the everyday lives and practices of people without recourse to symbolism and representation. In being shaped through each moment in practice, place forms as an object of consumption inasmuch as it impacts upon the practices being enacted in site, thus giving rise to a theoretical conceptualisation and also the ontology that place holds space and time within, positioning itself as the universal ontology and not a subset of space.

This examination of place is distinct from extant approaches in marketing literature which usually privilege only specific types of conversations and narratives as well as being predicated upon a narrow set of assumptions and predispositions while considering place and its treatments. This study deliberately eschews such categorisations and labelling and instead draws from disciplinary treatments beyond marketing boundaries to critique, theorise, and empirically validate the conceptualisation of place as an object of consumption formed, shaped, and affected by practice. This conceptualisation explicitly links the concepts of place, practices and consumption, empirically validates the theorisation and the adapted methodology as an epistemic practice, and offers a newly validated place ontology distinct from extant

approaches in marketing related disciplines. It brings together distinct theoretical, contextual, and methodological approaches not typically used in conjunction with one another.

The findings also underscore the relevance of practice theories and non-representational methods to understand, observe, examine, and interrogate place in marketing. Instead of being considered mere inputs-outputs or treated as self-contained actions enacted within pre-defined marketplace contexts, settings, or unchanging agglomerations, practices here are foregrounded as phenomenological understandings of place, stripped back to their essential non-representation, their interactional dynamics with place, and valorised as everyday actions rather than those read exclusively within a narrowly defined marketplace ideology. The findings illustrate the dynamism and fluidity of practices by tracing their trajectories through time and socio-historic contexts of place, and mapping their volatilities and turbulence as they shape place through its multiple settings. By focusing on the under-appreciated nature of everyday practices and brigading them through the universality of human experiences, the findings illustrate practices as the genomic factor, a pool of actions, competencies, and sensibilities that shape and in turn are shaped in place.

Reflection upon findings invite attention to the inherent processuality of both practices and place, an appreciation of their fluidity and porosity with a discernment that is normally absent from extant place treatments in consumption, marketing, and managerial sciences. By empirically examining both practices and place as mutually inter-shaping and texturing contemplative mechanisms, the study allows us to comprehend place through ahistoric,

aspatial lenses, and become more appreciative of the path-dependent, plastic nature of practices that continue to shape place through its multiple spatial-temporal frameworks, as a compenetrative, somatographic texturing of place and practice.

The findings emphasise the illocutionary force of place as an object of consumption shaped through practices and moments in each practice. Beyond that, the findings also unpack and deconstruct the ontic nature of place as being constitutive of space and time as component elements, revisiting their hierarchical positioning, and reconstituting their relationship to one where place is held and empirically validated to be the universal object, and space and time its component elements. By contextualising place and practice against consumption away from systemic ideas of production, place as consumed object opens itself up to broader contemplation beyond simple marketing and managerial settings to include a whole range of marketplace behaviours.

Research Contributions

This study makes several distinct methodological, theoretical discipline-specific, and managerial-axiological contributions to knowledge.

Methodological Contributions: One of the more important methodological contributions of the study is presenting the empirical tool of street ethnography in its adaptive form as an innovative epistemology for the theoretical contemplation of place in marketing and consumption. This study has revived a historical but near-moribund empirical method commonly used in urban sociology, revitalised it through an adaptation of an innovative methodological

toolkit, and repositioned it as a critical reflexive epistemic tool of knowledge production and a vehicle for phenomenological contemplation of place.

In framing the unit of study or observation, street ethnography draws from its genealogical antecedents of urban sociology and cultural anthropology to study site and cultures of people on the street respectively, but nevertheless moves away from its epistemological groundings to contemplate place in its repurposed form. This is distinct from extant methodological approaches in marketing scholarship which typically study either consumption settings or consumer actions but always independent of one another, underpinned by limited conceptual understandings. In contrast the adapted street ethnography breaks away these constraints to clearly frame place through practices for study and phenomenological contemplation.

Distinct from extant methods typically found in marketing, the adapted street ethnography, crafted as placemaking practice, is phenomenologically sensitised and has been especially equipped with an innovative multi-method toolkit. It builds on traditional ethnographic techniques such as field observations and interviews, but augments and enriches them with additional methods of go-along tools, memory walk-about sessions, narrative life stories, oral histories, audio-visual recordings, and deep seated sensory immersion, and triangulates them further with the extensive use of longitudinal, historical, archival data. The conscious deployment of a historical, longitudinal lens to track and map place, and interpret it through the lens of practices and non-representation, positions the epistemology as a processual, emergent approach to knowledge production.

This multi-method data capture helps reconstruct the place cartographically and historically, allowing chronological narratives to reinterpret place through the lens of genomic practices, and tracing their impact on the field site through multiple spatial-temporal dimensions. The methodology actively represents a way of reconstructing and reshaping the past through present knowledge and as a heuristic tool, becomes an invaluable addition to epistemological processes currently used to study place, and incentivises scholars to undertake similar future ventures.

The methodology also works around an emergent, processual research design in contrast to pre-determined study methods where concepts and frames of reference are tightly defined. In keeping with the ethnographic spirit of placemaking practice, the research design in this study is capacious and flexible enough to accommodate the bountiful methodological toolkit and empirical methods, as well as the fluid, nebulous nature of the field site itself which require constant deconstruction, layering, adaptation, and explorations of its spatial-temporal dynamics. This approach offers potential in studying other contexts that require fluidity of approach beyond set identity representations.

Uniquely, this methodology also captures extended periods of sensory immersion, familiarisation with field site, and critical reflection as an inherent empirical material, harnessed as vital input in clarifying the parameters and objectives of the study and shaping its design as it progresses. The sensory immersion grounds the ethnography as placemaking practice and the ethnographer as the embodied geographical self in keeping with the theoretical guidance of the study. Intense and prolonged site familiarisation draws

researcher attention to a host of grey, shadowy, and interstitial spaces not typically studied as place in the field site. A critical reflexive standpoint that threads through the methodology over its various stages allows respondent voices to be represented through understanding, affectation, and changing intensities, while a continual, iterative, three-way dialogical process between researcher, respondent, and reader audience emphasises positionality and embeds researcher in place and self. This reinvigoration repositions street ethnography as a uniquely critical reflexive epistemic tool of knowledge production, the kind that is almost entirely absent in marketing scholarship and this study offers much potential in expanding current scholarship and research.

Further this study uses practices and non-representational methods as units of analysis to thematise and present findings and use them to conceptualise place in consumption. The empirical material generated from field work is themed as everyday practices reflective of universal human experiences and uses non-representation to contextually and empirically interrogate place. The study strengthens the praxis value of practice theories and non-representational methods and emphasises the usefulness of adopting processual, longitudinal, and socio-historical perspectives in research, something that has been largely absent in marketing scholarship. The ethnography takes on the form of meta-narratives traversing the phenomenological to post-phenomenological landscape, an approach never knowingly used before to study place in the context of consumption, especially in marketing and managerial sciences. The overall methodological approach leading to empirical validation and conceptualisation demonstrates that both context-dependent and independent knowledge are equally valid in developing propositional generalisations and

scholarly contributions without being framed against specific settings, activities, or contexts.

Theoretical Discipline-Specific Contributions: This study makes several distinct theoretical, discipline-specific contributions that not only expand the boundaries of scholarly dialogue around place within marketing and consumption but also offer immense potential for further research and investigation. These contributions also cross-pollinate interdisciplinary influences in practice theories and non-representational methods from where ideas have been borrowed.

The single most important contribution to knowledge emerging from this study has been the empirically validated theoretical conceptualisation of place as an object of consumption shaped in and through practices. This conceptualisation consciously stands out from other input-output static place perspectives in extant marketing scholarship and provides an alternative way of theorising place in consumption, as an object consumed through practices. The study empirically demonstrates the relevance of practice theories to the study of place in the context of consumption and validates place as a process, not a static predetermined outcome. Scant previous studies have used practice theories to interrogate consumption while consumption also has been surmised as moments in practice. This study however goes further in explicitly linking practice theories and consumption to place, provides empirical illustration, and uses it to theorise place in the context of consumption, thus returning place theorisations to practice.

Considerations of practice in the context of place and consumption are particularly critical as current examinations of place in managerial sciences

and their conventional interpretations of consumption tend to privilege static, one-dimensional marketplace actions and actors. This leads to a propensity to seek explanations that fit the dominant thought narrative while neglecting and overlooking the genomic, catalytic, organic, and dynamic nature of practices, which are capable of nourishing, sustaining, and being instrumental in destroying and reinventing places and cartographic aggregations. Practices are pools of competencies, actions, and affects that are as capable of shaping a place as they are being shaped by it. Practices and place modify one another, always proactive, reactive, adaptive, mobile, regenerative, and absorptive of shaping conditions. Both are historical and evolutionary by nature, not always linear, but evolve through continual modifications, attrition, erosion, and regeneration. Neither can be defined through specific marketplace actions or contexts, or entrenched within specific settings. Practices are path dependent, places have plasticity, both reinventing themselves repeatedly through multiple activities, people, interactions, and socio-cultural contexts.

This study highlights this interactive nature of practice and place and by explicitly linking them to form pathways to consumption, allows for insights to be drawn about the contextualised and embedded nature of practices in place that develop against complex socio-historic forces and multiple spatial and temporal frameworks. It provides an important linking contribution to the knowledge of practices in place, complementing and to some extent questioning the 'presentism' found in contemporary theorisations of place in consumption scholarship. These pathways can be suggestive for future scholars to explore similar perspectives in the shadows of other socio-cultural contexts and mechanisms to examine further theorisations of place.

The study makes further disciplinary contributions by expanding place as a unit of observation beyond extant treatments through a processual as opposed to static snapshot approach. Instead of unquestioningly treating it as a given static unit, place is instead unpacked and deconstructed through its component elements of space and time, and empirically validated as a fluid, dynamic, nebulous, yet palpable entity. The conceptualisation also offers a critique of snapshot, static approaches to examining place and its extant treatments in managerial sciences and adds a rare voice in discussing the processual, eventuating nature of practices, and their role in shaping place. The longitudinal approach of the study extends the chronological timespan of similar such observations, drawing attention to a philosophical, processual, phenomenologically-grounded view of place as a universal, its evolutionary processes, how it is constituted, comes into being, and situated in the broader environment of consumption. By empirically examining a place not usually covered in consumption studies to contextualise practice, the study provides a bridging link in extant scholarship between place and consumption and enriches its historical processual understanding.

The study contributes to place treatments in applied managerial sciences by allowing for place examination beyond immediate marketplace logic and a host of supra-economic behaviours. Place is captured through the interpenetration of a range of settings from commercial servicescapes to dark, interstitial spaces, all equally worthy of valorisation, their richness and scope of actions, not always captured by explanations of marketplace logic. It adds to more combative explanations of place beyond those subsumed to the service of marketplace logic in managerial sciences, and privileges places

and practices as resilient, sustainable, evolutionary, mutually texturing processes shaped through a combination of endogenous and exogenous factors. Extant scholarship demonstrates only a nascent emergence of such critiques where similar approaches remain largely embryonic with little or no visible attempts to synthesise novel interdisciplinary perspectives in reconceptualising and resituating place. Form and function overlap and supplement across sites and settings, their enactments seen as perpetuations of ingrained, hereditary, implicit competencies that give rise to marketplace settings, sustain and shape market structures and consumer actions, facilitate access to those on the peripherals, recast people as consumer actors with varying range of responsibilities. Without eschewing the dominant logic of market capitalism, the study expands understanding of marketplace, setting, structure, and actor, and invites attention to how the market and consumption liquefies and flows through a range of spatial and temporal dimensions. It also empirically highlights the fallacies of capturing place in cultural identity entrapments and the underlying homogenous, isomorphic thinking; instead attention is drawn to the processual, flowing, dynamic nature of place, its plasticities, and path dependencies, in order to understand how it is textured by universal practices.

Through the framing of the units of analysis and representation, the study enriches the areas of practice theories and non-representational methods by specifically and explicitly inviting them into the domain of marketing and managerial sciences and demonstrates an empirical validation of their applicability in areas of consumption and place related scholarship.

The biggest contribution to theory comes from evidencing and empirically validating the reenchanting ontological hierarchy of place vis-à-vis space. Place is empirically resituated as universal, superseding its co-constructs of space and time, and not viewed as abstract carved out of and subsumed to territory and geography. Through this ontological restructuring of space and place hierarchy, place is restored to its rightful universality and demonstrated as a construct worthy of empirical contemplation in its own right. The study empirically demonstrates how practices can be a processual way of understanding place, and more importantly validates through ethnographic placemaking practice, the process of somatography in how places and practices texture and shape one another.

Through the conceptualisation of place as a form of practice, and the empirical validation of place as composite of and beyond the spatial and temporal, the study now opens up the possibility of interrogating place in its myriad forms – geographical, territorial, temporal, metaphorical, sited, imagined, performed, and practiced – as consumed objects. The concept of place can now be contextualised as a geographical site, a cartographic entity, a lived, embodied, and practiced space of various scales from home or a lived environment to a universality of experience. Because place is now imagined in the form of practice, any place that is shaped through how it comes into being can now be observed and conceptualised through practice. This opens up an enormous range of possibilities for exploring contexts within consumption.

Axiological Managerial Contributions: The ***axiological*** value of the study is derived from the clarity it provides to marketing treatments of place construct, cutting through muddying terminologies and unquestioning assumptions. Through empirical interrogation, the study situates place as distinct and separate from space, validated as being constitutive of both space and time, perceived beyond aesthetic and architectural confines. This frees marketing and managerial practitioners from insular thinking and formulaic understandings of servicescapes as settings of marketplace transactions and expressions of business activity, and reductive portrayals of human beings as consumer-shoppers.

With place as holistic, practitioners can now pay equal attention to back-of-house and grey spaces within retail servicescapes as catalysts and shapers of marketplace activities rather than obsess exclusively with front-of-house aesthetics and retailing. Practitioners can valorise everyday activities and capture their genomic qualities in order to understand how some of them shape the marketplace and are understood as conventional shopping behaviours, but also understand consumers as human actors who perpetuate places as marketplace structures through mundane actions.

Away from servicescapes, practitioners are invited to pay attention to a whole range of settings from homes to public, civic, and communal spaces and view them as locales facilitating the marketplace that bring together actors, activities, practices, and performances with varying range of competencies, all contributing invaluablely to shaping marketplaces, all equally worthy of valorisation. Their richness constitutes an important source of value contribution in the inexorable transition from a market economy to a market

society. Conventional market settings foster a range of supra-economic behaviours just as non-conventional ones catalyse a range of complex behaviours that affect marketplace structures. Mainstream marketing scholarship has been slow to the potential of the sharing economy, values nested in public and communal spaces, and blurred boundaries between public and private, the latter still being treated with deep schism.

Mainstream marketing scholarship has been unable to rise beyond understandings of caricatured place commodification, explaining their propensity to position town centres as shopping destinations and brand territorial entities within captured envelopes of identity and cultural traps. This divorces and decontextualizes marketing from a broader view of economic activity, leaving it unable to understand genomic factors of location centres, explain why town centres built around shopping struggle to survive while urban neighbourhoods with a denser embedding of socio-economic potential thrive and flourish across the world, or how migrant communities coalesce in declining, post-industrial areas and transform place through embedded practices. Understanding practices enables marketing scholarship to grasp their regenerative potential by capturing competencies and capabilities that texture a place, revitalise socio-economic contexts, create and shape settings that are machineries for living, and valorise them.

More importantly since place has been conceptualised through actions and practices, through an understanding of how they are made, lived, experienced, and practiced in everyday actions, the context of a place can now be applied to a range of constructs from geographical and territorial to memorialised,

imagined, and practiced and all of these can be explored in the context of how they come to be shaped and consumed.

Final Thoughts

The research is not without its limitations and shortcomings but offers immense potential for further scholarly development.

Limitations: A research project of this size, scale, and scope is not typical of similar research doctoral studies especially in marketing and consumption which privilege quantitative studies and assembly line projects. I had the slight advantage of being a self-funded part-time doctoral student and therefore was able to commit to the demands of empirical work required for this project. Qualitative, ethnographic work was time- and resource-intensive and demanded a huge amount of motivation among all other work and family commitments. A study of this scale and scope is also not easily replicable and may not be practical for many scholars to undertake similar types of study. Despite the amount of time I spent in the field site, I remained for the most part an outsider which in many cases can hamper observation and interpretation. The qualitative nature of the project and the subjective nature of respondent views also can be queried where definitive answers cannot be obtained. The type of empirical context and field site is also not easily replicable as it may not always be possible for scholars to find a field site that is rich enough to support a multi-method empirical toolkit that generates findings and insights for further theorisation. This type of study also requires a huge amount of interdisciplinary reading and borrowing of ideas from adjacent areas of scholarship which may not always be supported by conventional research study programmes.

Recommendations for Future Research: Some of the limitations outlined above can by themselves be turned into recommendations for future research and further avenues for scholarly investigation. The conceptualisation of place as a processual, practiced object of consumption offers several avenues for greater exploration. This conceptualisation can now be empirically tested and validated across a range of place contexts by examining the nature of practices that shape a place and in turn how places shape actions and practices, generating new opportunities for replication. A place and therefore an empirical context can now be a choice of a geographical setting, a territorial set of coordinates, a lived and practiced place, an imagined, memorialised, virtualised, augmented, or intimate space, an everyday place that is lived, embodied, experienced, and practiced in multiple ways, and a realm of practices and habitudes that gives rise to cultural understandings of consumption that are also transportable and mutable. Each one of these can be contextualised as objects of consumption and explored intimately to study how they are conceived as objects of consumption in the moments they are practiced. The conceptualisation and the scope of the empirical work also offers opportunities for expanding the idea of place within marketing to a whole range of contexts beyond retail settings. Even within conventional servicescape settings the idea of place can be extended to those grey and interstitial spaces that normally fall outside the scope of aestheticized areas of investigation typically found in marketing scholarship, whose roles in shaping the marketplace remain underexplored including back of the house settings. Further the explicit emphasis on non-representational methods to analyse place and practice can help expand marketer attention to areas beyond identity and symbolism traps where a rich

scope of actions, practices, and roles of marketplace actors remain unexplored with a view to understanding how consumption shapes everyday life.

A critical revisiting of ideas of place and consumption with a view to rethinking extant definitions and advancing alternative conceptualisations is long overdue. The above contributions and implications emerging from the study touching upon epistemological, ontological, and axiological aspects of knowledge, form a worthy tribute to the richness that is Belgrave.

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Appendix 1: Methodological Toolkit

Some samples of empirical material...

Extract from field observation notes...17.04.10

Road very crowded today....taken me ages to make my way through and walk up and down the streets...wedding season is in full flow....jewellery shops are heaving....hoping to go to xxxx Jewellers today and speak to xxxxxx about his shop and customers but I can see from the doorway that he is busy chockful of customers...been sitting here atacross the road, sipping lassi, writing this up for about an hour now...good spot to watch the customers....this one family is really interesting...clearly matriarch, traditional Indian Gujarati clothes judging by how she wears her saree...daughter in early twenties, presumably one for whom she has been buying, two teenage sons....bored harassed looking father...been watching this drama going on for almost an hour now....like a snake dance...think she is in the market for a gold necklace....by my count she has looked at almost twenty five boxes, kinda hard to figure out her tastes and what she is looking for....she keep handling the jewellery, asks a few questions, puts it back, shakes her head, points to something in the back, shop guy takes it out....occasionally pushes something...she glares at him...wish I could lip read....not sure she is going to buy anything....shop guy clearly hoping but she is demanding....suspect she is enjoying this too much....

Extract from narrative / oral history (KxxxxJxxxPxxxxx)....23.05.10

We came here in 1972 from Uganda...four years before...worked in factory...Imperial Typewriter...then British Shoes for four years...first I was doing part time photography for weddings...everybody knows me from Uganda...I was working as a photographer in Uganda...I was running my studio in Uganda since 1956...50 years in business now...I started slowly...then became a full time photographer...

We lived in nearby Greenland Road...then I bought the shop here in Belgrave Road...at that time property value was very less...so we can afford that...

I think everybody was telling that this was demolition area 30 years ago...all the property was up for demolition...but then people came from Uganda...they started businesses...improvement of property...the properties were not like this before...everything did shop windows...they did shop windows...this and that...everything has changed now...for the better...improvement...

I don't know why this place was marked for demolition...if you ask the Belgrave neighbourhood centre they will give you a proper idea...

At that time this property was about £7-8000, we spent £2-3000

Extract from interview (JPL – local business) 3.11.11

Me: so what in your opinion is the key to this area? What makes it what it is? Why do you think it is popular?

JP: To me this is an Indian area and will always be an Indian area. As a community we have been here for more than 30 years setting up businesses....running shops....we take our culture and values very seriously....and maintain it....

Me: By Indian you mean Gujarati?

JP: well we are the dominant people here...we started shops...built businesses...

Me: what about those who were here before you? Do you see them as part of your community?

JP: yes well some of them are here....they seem to keep themselves aloof....we don't see them at garba...many have moved away...the Goans, Sindhis, some of the Punjabis....not here...

Me: do you see new people moving in? do you think there has been lots of change in this area?

JP: yeah....some, it's a big city, there will always be comings and goings but we have to make sure that this area remains an Indian area....my business is here, our interests....

Extract from in-home conversations / interview (K)...05.01.11

Me: is that where you picked up your love of machines? Have you always been mechanically minded?

Ken: oh yes, it was all I wanted to do since I was a kid. I was always curious, used to hang around the factories after school, picking up conversations with shift workers, waiting for my father. They always used to give me these small tools which I used to play with. It just seemed natural to get a job in a factory once I finished school...never really wanted to do anything else....the village was changing fast anyway....everyone was getting jobs in the factories....it seemed like steady, stable wages...I loved the factory shop floor....it was always noisy...these days they have all these ear muffs and equipment....we had nothing....the noise...drilling...sounds...I learned a lot but I also taught myself a lot....I was one of the first to be trained on the EDM wire machines....years later I went to Eching....its near Munich...I visited the factory and saw it made...we had one here....

Me: tell me about the factories...were they big ones...how many people worked here on average?

Ken: oh factories changed hands very quickly...sometimes families...partnerships...changed hands but workers continued on...we were very busy before and during the war...shifts never stopped...it was exciting...I spent all my time there...took my cycle in the morning...even built my own cycle from scratch....oats for breakfast at 5am...wash in cold water...dress in the dark...cycle for 6am shift....

Extract from participant / observation / notes....20.12.12

Today was a long but fun day...I was at Mick's place in the morning....slowly the others dropped in....I thought I would catch a chance to sit and chat with them, maybe even catch them if they went shopping in B&M....instead they dragged me off to the pub....turns out Mick and Brian had a fruitful night last night at the bingo...won around 150 quid between the two of them....lots of discussions about how they were going to spend the money...Ann piped up about buying drinks....and I ended up getting a slice of chocolate cake too...massive piece...Brian insisted on a pint of ale for me...gave me a chance to speak to them about how they shared the spoils and if they gave any housekeeping money to the 'girls'....turns out they do....one conversation led to another and it was a chance for me to ask them how they managed their wages when they worked in the factories....it is interesting to see how in touch they are with money, a real immediacy with the importance of money and the security it brings....they are very sharp, doing calculations in their head....had a productive chat with Mick...he told me about how they would queue for pay day which was actually Thursday, not Friday as I thought, sometimes Friday afternoon...counting the notes, heading home, giving housekeeping money to the wife, getting ready and going to the pub...Mick said not everyone was smart with their money...some of them were so broke they ended up pawning their best Sunday suit for cash which they redeemed in the next week's pay only to repeat the cycle...then there were races...the horses, even dogs....but not these two....they just saved for home...

Extract from go-along / accompanied walks Al....07.01.12

Had an interesting day today walking around with Axxxx....she has a wicked sense of humour, her Lancashire accent in full flow today as she keeps up the most politically incorrect commentary as we walk together....her mission today is to buy an ethnic outfit...her office colleague is getting married in June and Axxxx wants to "go all full ethnic bird...." for the wedding. We have marched up and down at least five shops in the morning as she keeps up the tale of how she was briefly married to an Asian Indian man about thirty years ago...short lived marriage....her memories of coming to Belgrave Road....the marriage barely lasted a few months but her visits to the road have continued....she is a fount of memories and an amazing sense of recollection as she talks about her impressions of how the roads have changed...she has sampled virtually every restaurant in the street and recommends nice places....we had coffee today morning at CxxxxDxxxxx and all the staff knew her by name.....we finally managed to find what she was looking for at Mxxxxx, a beautiful blue and green outfit threaded with gold, a tight choli and a full skirt that she says was not designed for her stomach that has borne four children "of three different men....one I am not really sure...ha ha ha..." The colours look gorgeous against her pale skin and blonde hair, the aquamarine shade picking up the blue of her eyes....she has a good eye for a bargain and manages to get a discount off the shop...

Extract from shop interviews / conversations with local shop owners....KN...05.11.12

My grandfather started this shop in 1956....he came from India...was working as a bus driver....and saw an opportunity to buy this shop where the family could live upstairs....people will always need to buy newspapers and cigarettes and tobacco...he still comes in from time to time to make sure I am running the shop properly...(laughs)

He says and I believe him...times were very different....my father grew up on this shop floor...learned to run the shop....and he started up the post office years later....my grandfather says he used to get a lot of trouble from *gorey goondas*....neighbours complained about smells....old ladies would spit on the door or yell abuse....but the thugs were the worst....they would fling stones at the door from across the road or just walk into the shop and upset things....*nanaji* always had a big hockey stick under the till....the minute he saw these guys walking through the door, he would pick up the stick and swing it around.....and they would run off....he still tells that story...its very funny....but things have changed a lot...the area is very different now...

Extract from memory walks...Rxxxxx...30.08.12

I have very distinct memories of this road and Melton Road.....my father worked as a bank manager right up here in the local branch of Westminster Bank...he was very well regarded.....we moved when I was about 9 or 10....my sisters and I used to attend the local church and sing in the choir....

Church going is probably one of the biggest changes that happened on this road with the changing population....not many of the new incomers were Christian...besides I have always thought that church going in the traditions of CoE was a very white middle class thing.... And we are firmly in that bracket....I wouldn't have thought that churchgoing as a habit was very strong amongst the working classes....certainly things like choir, Sunday worship and so on was a very stringent CoE tradition....and I cannot imagine many of those traditions survived after the changes to the area following immigration.....certainly many of the white middle classes moved out quite quickly into the suburbs and took their church going practices with them....I am not surprised many of these churches fell into disrepair....the surviving populations would not have kept them going with their habits and many of the newcomers were certainly not Christian....at least not the same denomination....

Extract from notes....street intercepts.....05.11.11

Some of the stand out conversations that I've had today with people on the street...

The young-ish mother of two who has dragged her son and daughter to the Rxxxxx temple promising to buy them icecream...

The elderly man at the Mcxxxx bus stop....I've seen him at the same bus stop at around the same time about 4-5 times now and I just had to talk to him....from Tanzania....three daughters settled in UK....wife dies....daughters pester him to move....he moves....daughters move away...now he is lonely...and he hates this place he says! Feel really bad for him. I asked him why he hates the place....he says there is no respect in Britain...and he does not like the rain but he knows he cannot go back to Tanzania so he just sits at this bus stop talking to random people

Three French students from Loughborough college...their English teacher apparently wants them to write an essay on local customs and culture so they are on a field visit of their own viewing the Diwali lighting decorations going up....they find everything strange, the food, the street lighting, the noise...but seem to be enjoying themselves...

Archives section - Leic. C.C.
Belgrave Parish Church -
St. Peter's Church - A gen. guide
Rev Canon EKL Quire no date - no pub detail

Once inhabited by Britons known as Coritani
settlement of Merdegrave (CHECE) given in meaning
on the banks of River Leire, now Soan
- old Roman road nearby - excavations
near Talbot Inn -
parts of bridge near Thurcaston from Roman times.

Mentioned in Domesday book (CHECE)
property of Hugh de Cresentines.
Given as reward for fighting with the King
(or) given by Earl of Leic. (Henry II?)

Church grant to Abbot of St Edmund's Uice
Normandy 1082 -
first mention of Merdegrave on Belgrave.

Extract from reflective journal / introspection / auto-ethnography...

This last month on each one of my visits to the road, I've eaten at Bxxxxx...it has given me an opportunity to observe the restaurant and talk to people here....I've gone to the temple endowed by this family....I've interviewed Jxxxx because he is local business federation head honcho....spoken to his wife on at least 2 visits sitting in the restaurant....brought Rxxxxx here for a meal.....and have sat here and observed the crowds....on the one hand I admire the family's persistence and drive for having come to this country and working hard to set up a business empire...classic immigrant success story....recognise so many of the qualities in myself, the drive, ambition, deep seated insecurity that never really goes away, the need to be accepted....but I also have seen and observed so many things that I have misgivings about what this represents.....this place is run down and definitely showing signs of neglect....service is poor, much poorer than last year...food is really bad and the service is even worse...the woman is clearly a nightmare to work for...she insults staff openly in front of customers and it is clear many of them are illegal workers....they barely speak English, have no manners, sing loudly, shout amongst themselves and argue in front of customers...the tenement buildings are run down...Jxxxx is a creep, a loathsome creepy man that I recognise from so many other people I've worked for....yet is a respectable community figure and talks to me about culture and values....they have used this place but don't seem to give anything back....it makes me think a lot about how we connect to somewhere as people...what makes some place home...and where do we draw the line

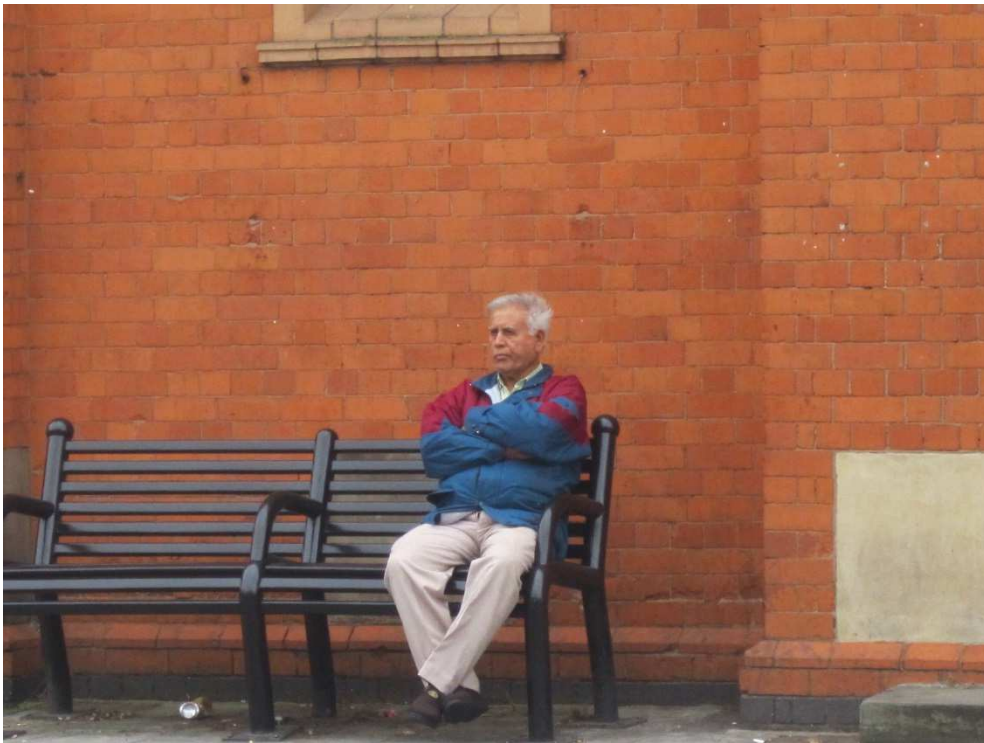
Screenshot of video recording of Diwali celebration fireworks



Some photos of the streetscape...



Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre



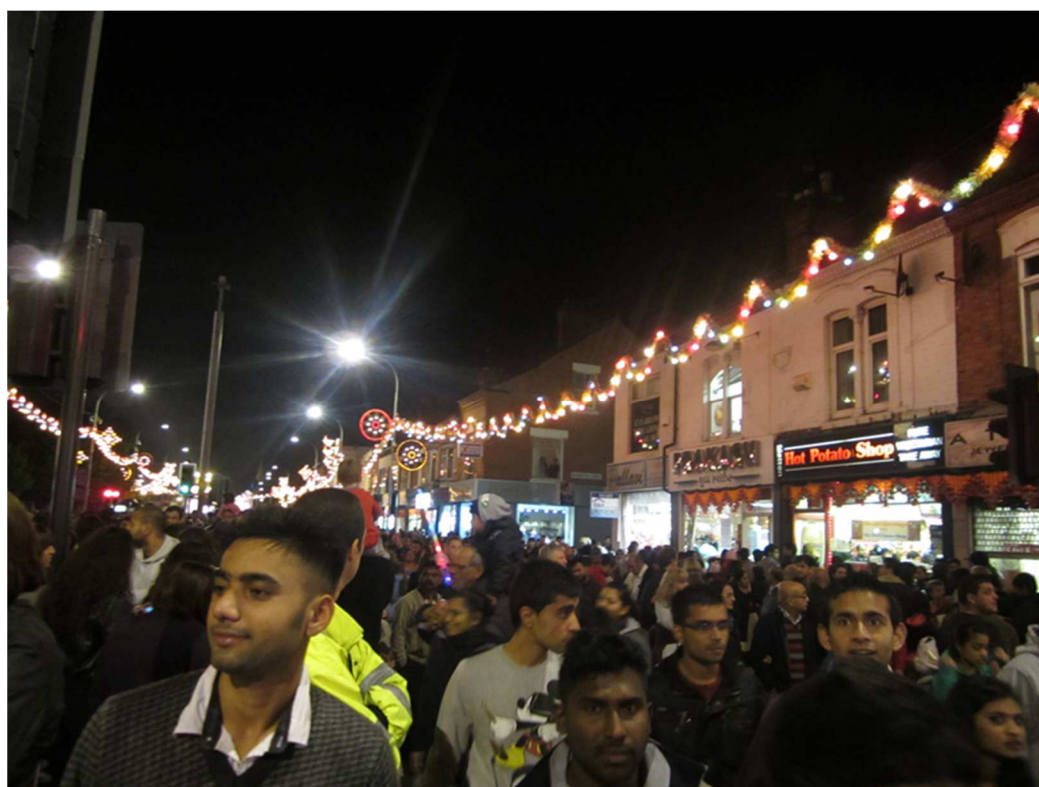
The man from Tanzania....



Typical shop fronts....



The neighbourhood centre at night all lit up and decorated for Diwali...



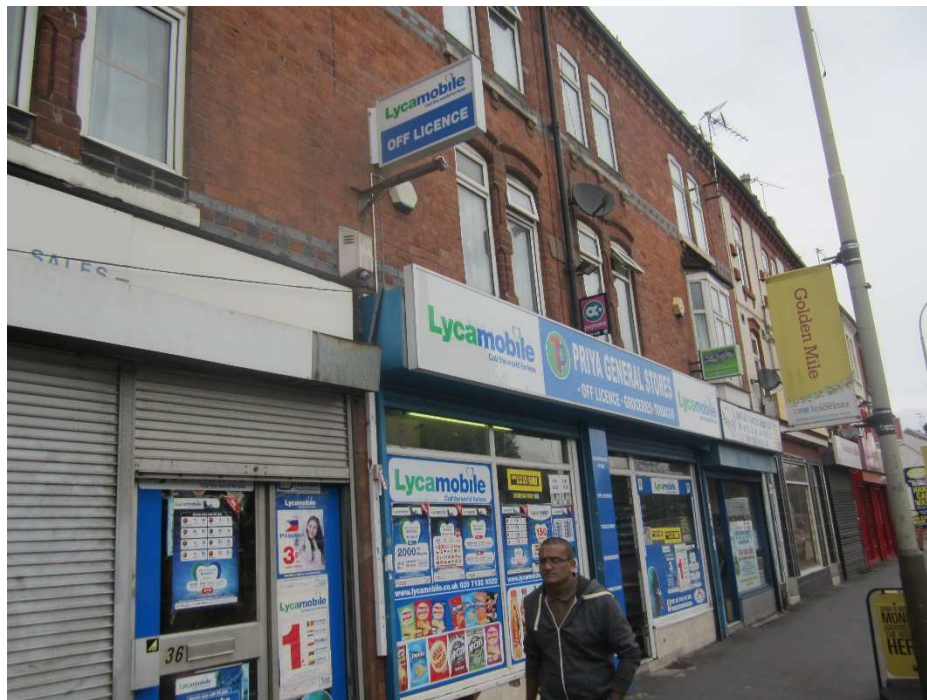
After the lighting ceremony, street carnival....and heading for fireworks...



Shop front at night....



Heading for his only meal at the neighbourhood centre....



Beyond the glamour....the Golden Mile....



'Asha' means Hope.....and charity

Appendix 2: Details of Fieldwork and Field Site Engagement

Time	Duration of Field Work	Activities	How recorded	Purpose and Objective
Feb 2010	Initial visit to field site – three day time visits to Belgrave Road, each lasting about 4 hours not counting travel time	Familiarisation with field site, immersion, observations, casual conversations with street people, visitors, and traders	Field observations, brief notes, phone memos	To clarify nature of research and study direction, to decide on choice of field site among 2-3 options
End of Feb 2010 to June 2010	Average weekly visits, once a week, spending 5-6 hours each day, usually Fridays and Saturdays exclusive of travel time	Familiarisation with field site, immersion, observations, casual conversations with street visitors and local traders, walk-about trips, visiting local shops, restaurants, accompanying 3 families on their monthly shopping trips to Belgrave Road in April and May 2010	Observations and brief notes	Further clarification of research study, reading, identifying initial data categorisation, further clarification of research objectives
Last week of August 2010	A three day visit to the field site – stayed at a local B&B	Familiarisation with Belgrave Road and the surrounding area including side streets, Melton Road, Belgrave Sports Centre – late evening walks, observations, street intercepts, discussions with traders, social experiments asking people to describe and identify Belgrave Road and their spatial perceptions of field site	Observations, field notes, phone memos, photographs	A resituated approach to the research study privileging empirical work and allowing the emerging data and empirical work to drive and define the research study – initial collation of data along categorisation of retail settings, activities, range and type of visitors, with particular focus on East African Indian migrant communities and their life connections to the field site
First two weeks of September 2010	Sit down in-home interviews with long-time residents in Belgrave –	Conducting interviews and narrative life histories with long-time residents – primarily	Interview notes and transcripts	Gather insights into the lives of migrant communities and their connections to Belgrave – the

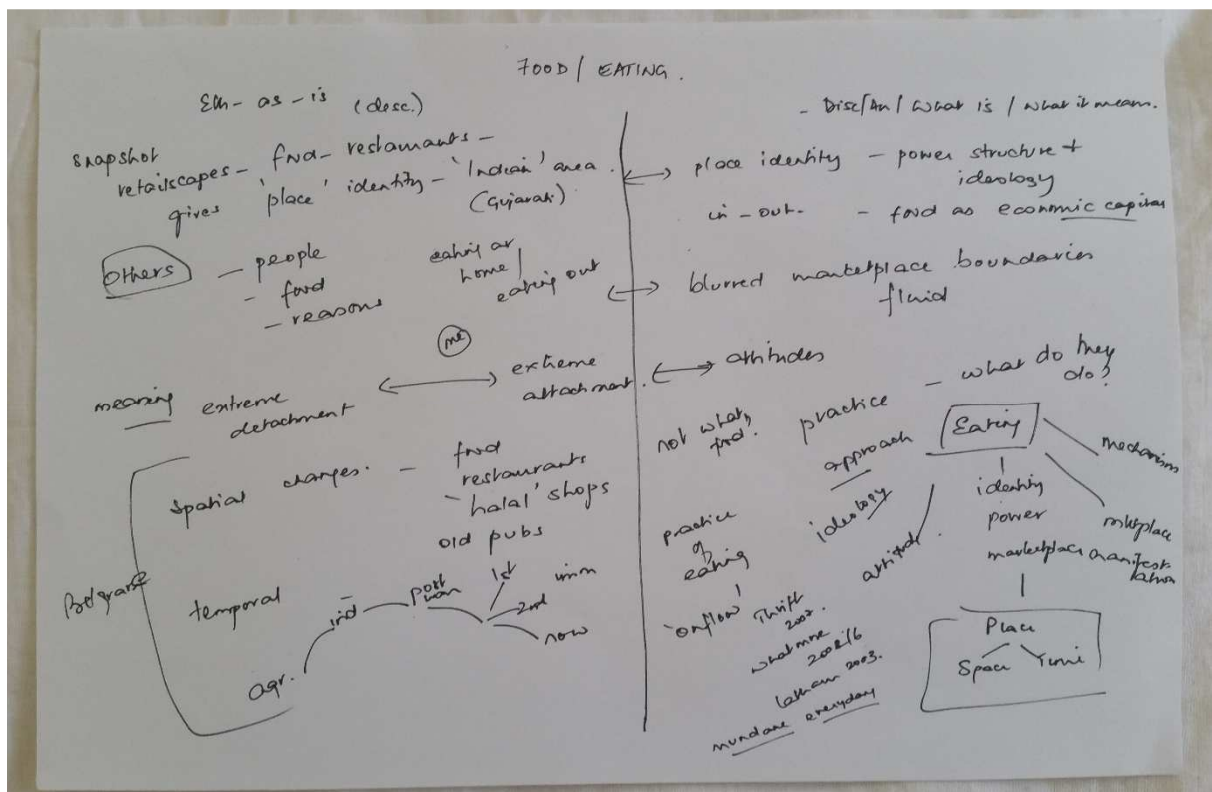
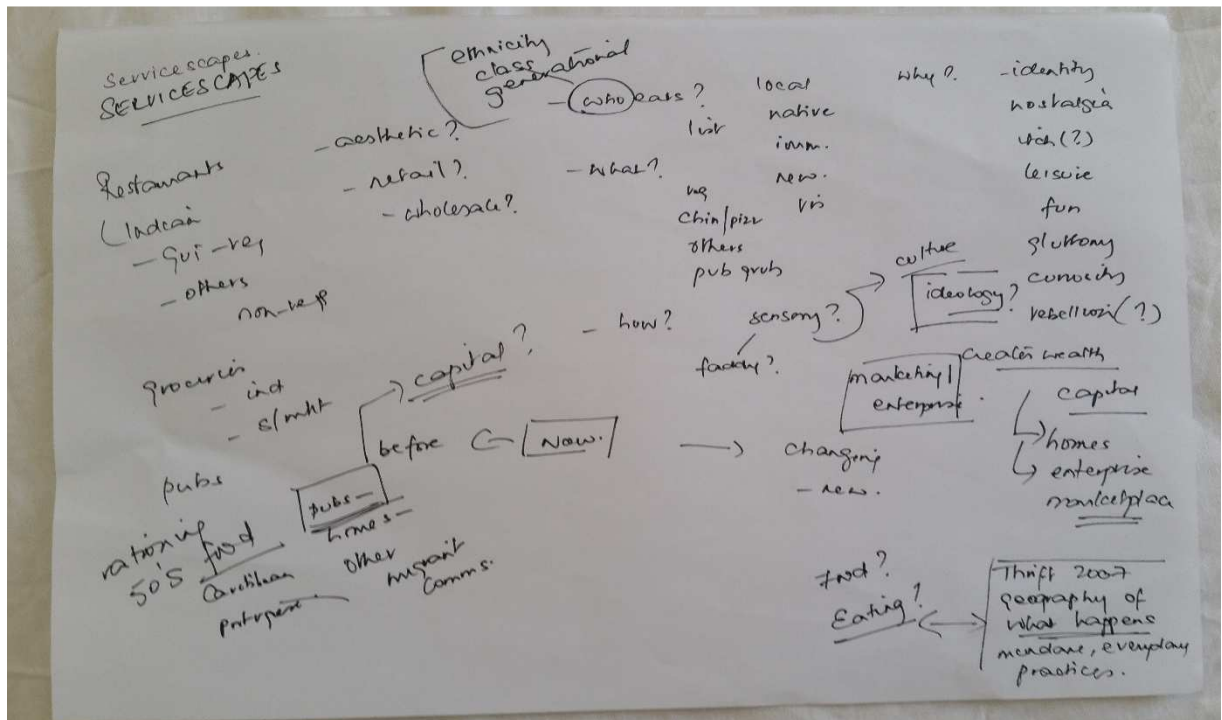
	about 6 sessions, each lasting on average 90 minutes	East African Indian communities		research study was still undefined at this stage and was fluid around identity related issues in place
Last week of September 2010	First introductions to three native Belgrave residents – two day trips each about 8-9 hours and one half day trip	In-home discussions, conversations about life on Belgrave pre- and post-war, early origins of Belgrave – white working class residents of Belgrave	Notes	Clarifying thoughts about the nature of place and reaching beyond identity and culture issues to define place as unit of observation
First week of October 2010	Two more day visits to Belgrave and surrounding streets	Meeting up with residents in their homes, discussing Belgrave and changes to area before and after war time – early history	Notes and observations	Clarifying nature and direction of research study about place
Second week of October 2010	Two day trips to Belgrave and attendance at EDL-UAF protest march	Observations, discussions with street visitors	Notes and observations	Observing issues of power and ownership on street
October to November 2010	Average weekly visits, typically on Saturdays, each lasting on average 10-12 hours, approximately 10 visits including two 2-night stays in the local area for festival celebrations	Immersion, observations, street intercepts, documenting festival celebrations on the street, ritual practices and festivities, private and public festive celebrations, dance gatherings	Notes, photos, video recordings	Observe streetscape during festive season and peak visitor crowds, gather spontaneous impressions, and changing nature of lived and shared place experience
November 2010 to January 2011	About 7-8 day visits to the area	Immersion, observations, conversations with residents in the community centre, home visits to long time Belgrave residents, introductions to white working class natives who had since moved out of the area and lived in the suburbs	Notes, photos, videos, memory reconstructions, walk-about sessions	Reconstructing spatial history of Belgrave through anecdotal evidence, memories, changing macro and micro landscape

January to June 2011	No visits but regular phone conversations with long-time residents	Phone calls, keeping in touch with people like Ken, Mick, Joe, Brian etc.	N/A	Maintaining contacts with key informants
June 2011	Two day trips and one four-night stay visit to area	Immersion, observation, connected with a few early Caribbean migrants, in-home discussions	Notes, observations, photos, oral histories	Expanding the nature of study, clarifying objectives around place, including ideas about practices and non-representation into study
July 2011 / August 2011	Accessing archival materials in New York and Washington DC public libraries	Accessing archival material from public libraries in New York and Washington DC for referral materials on historical families from Leicestershire Belgrave	Notes	Reconstructing place as a historical site shaped by practices over time
End of August 2011	Four day visits to Belgrave, surrounding areas in Melton Road, Abbey Park, and suburbs	Accompanying ex-residents and informants with ties to the area on memory walk-about trips	Notes, photos	Memory reconstructions of place, go-along methods, to obtain first hand insights into everyday practices impacted by and in place
September to October 2011	Weekly visits and day trips usually on Saturdays	Discussions with shop owners, traders, shoppers, visitors, street intercept interviews	Notes, observations, recordings, photos, transcripts	Gain insights into practices, consumption habits, retailing, marketplace, and shopping seasons
October to November 2011	Three overnight visits each lasting 2-3 nights	Observing and participating in festival celebrations, street lighting ceremony, prayers, street intercept interviews, discussion with visitors, shop owners, traders, key informant interviews with tradespeople, business federations, local business personalities	Notes, recordings, photos, observations, immersion, audio-video recordings, transcripts, phone memos, night walks	Insights into multiple practices, intimate observations of people, street rhythms,
December 2011 to January 2012	Multiple weekly / bi-weekly visits to homes of residents in and around Belgrave and	Continuing discussions and narratives of life on Belgrave, observations, participations in their daily life – some	Notes, observations	Insights into people, lives, practices, and connections with Belgrave past and present

	beyond in Leicestershire	shopping trips, go-about trips and walk-along trips		
April / May 2012	Four day visits to local residents' homes, bedsits, community centre	Immersion, observation, conversations, familiarisation	Notes, observations	Insights into people, changing place, changing connections
May / June 2012	Two day visits to local council library and archives	Notes on historical archives including parish council records	Notes	Historical information on Belgrave
July 2012	Three day visits to local area	Occasions at local temple, attendance at wedding, dance event, interview with key informants at community centre	Notes, transcripts, photos	Further insights into people and practices
August 2012	Three day visits	Memory walk-about trips with ex-residents	Notes, conversations, discussions	Memory reconstructions
September 2012	4-5 informal visits to residents' homes and community centres	Connecting with people, keeping in touch	Conversations, observations	To maintain contact in the field and to follow up on questions and clarifications
October to November 2012	Two overnight visits each lasting 2-3 nights	Observing and participating in festival celebrations, street lighting ceremony, street intercept interviews, discussion with visitors, shop owners, traders, key informant interviews with tradespeople, business federations, local business personalities – also conversation with local constabulary and services	Notes, recordings, photos, observations, immersion, audio-video recordings, transcripts, phone memos, night walks	Insights into multiple practices, intimate observations of people, street rhythms, festivities, changes in spatial landscape
December 2012	Informal visits to local residents' homes – key informant interviews and oral histories	Informal discussions – to participate in Christmas celebrations – in-home visits – attendance at funeral	Observations, memos, notes	Maintaining contact with key informants – social interactions
June 2013	Three nights and days visit	Immersion, observation, patrol with Leicestershire	Notes, observations, photos	Observe spatial changes, immersion in

		police, discussions with MP office, accessing archival history at local council and parish records, street intercepts		atmosphere, an informal goodbye to field site
July 2014	Four days and nights visit	Personal home visits to meet key informants (kept in touch through phone in interim period), meeting new residents on the street, visitors, discussions	Observations, Notes	Observing spatial changes, immersion, and renew familiarity with site
August 2014	Four days and nights visit	Personal visits to participant homes, walk-along trips, interview with key informant, discussion in local MP office, street interviews, home visits	Observations, photos, notes, impressions	Observing area, theming, analysis
June 2015	Four days and nights visit	Personal visits to participant homes, memory walkabout trips, observations, immersion, visiting shops	Notes, photos	Observe changes in landscape, street rhythms, absorb atmosphere, match up emerging analysis in writing up process with remembered ideas and experiences
Early September 2015	Two days and nights visit	Personal visits to participant homes	Photos, Notes, immersion	Observations, to absorb atmosphere after preliminary draft writing was near-complete
December 2015	Two days and nights visit	Personal visits to participant homes, celebrations, atmospheres	Photos, observation, immersion	General visit, to keep in contact with people

Appendix 3: Data Coding, Labelling, and Preliminary Analysis: Temporary Sutures



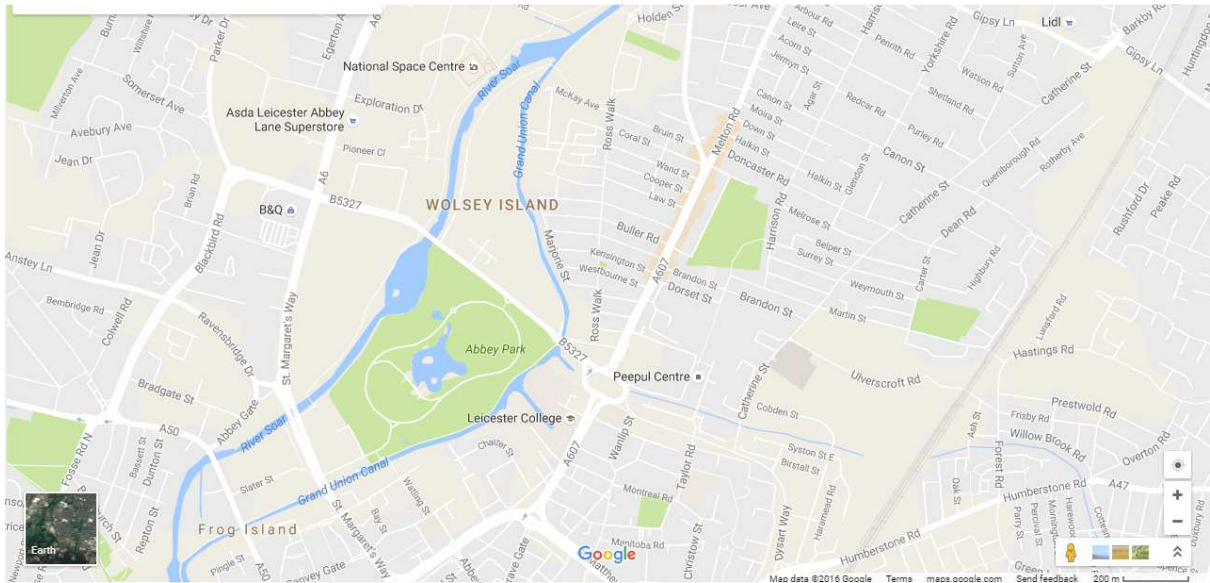
Appendix 4: Principles of Ethical Research

This research study commenced in October 2009. Fieldwork started around February 2010 with the last field visit undertaken in December 2015. The range, scope, and intensity of field work made the collection of empirical material challenging and complex. Owing to the predominantly qualitative nature of data collection and the involvement of a wide range of participants of varying interactions, I followed a set of research protocols throughout the course of this study that underpinned my ethical principles of research and commitment to data collection. Outlined below are some key aspects of ethical conduct of research that I adapted and followed:

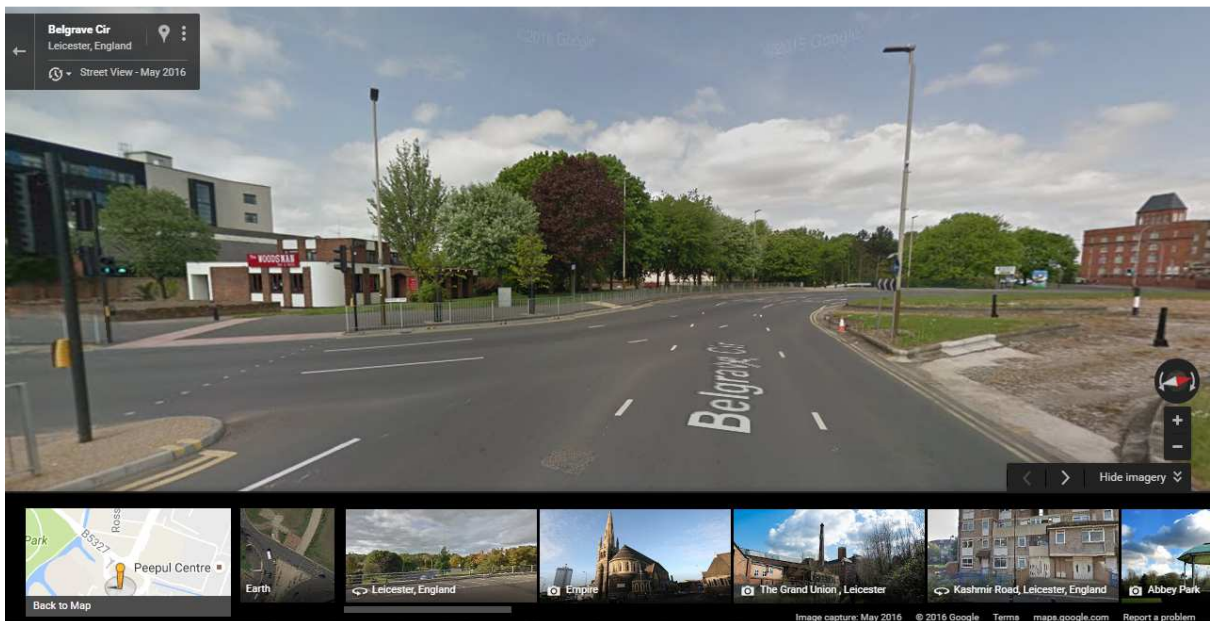
1. All participants and respondents involved in the study were fully informed about the purpose and scope of the research. I made full disclosure about my status as a research student, my institutional affiliation accompanied by my student photo ID and my professional academic ID. My research was entirely personal, self-funded, intended only for the purpose of gaining a professional academic qualification, and involved no commercial angle, sponsorship element, or activities on behalf of any profit-making body that would cause conflict of interest.
2. All the research respondents participated in this study voluntarily, of their own volition, and were at no time subject to any kind of coercion or undue influence to take part in the study. Most participants including street respondents, shop owners, traders, visitors etc. were approached openly without subterfuge. I disclosed full details about myself, identified myself clearly, and stated that I was conducting research on / about the road for my doctoral thesis. Almost all of them gave their time and attention generously. With long-term residents, core respondents, and interactions involving in-home participations, I was always introduced to these people and invited into their homes by mutual friends, relatives, and other trusted family members. Some of the participants involved in memory walks were personal friends of mine who were willing to help. Many other people that I met and interacted with such as visitors at the neighbourhood centre, I built up familiarity and trust with them through repeated visits and interactions. For key respondents such as business federations, community centres, local councils etc., I approached them formally and requested interviews which were mostly granted.
3. I did my utmost to maintain respondent right to dignity and autonomy. Eliciting first hand memories from participants in the form of narrative stories and oral histories was a key aspect of data collection and it was therefore doubly important to encourage participants to speak freely. I was aware that some of the participants were elderly and vulnerable especially during recollections of past memories which could be emotional. I never approached any of them alone and was always accompanied by trusted family members or spoke to them within the premises of the neighbourhood centre.

4. I took every precaution in anonymising the data and maintaining participant confidentiality. In particular some of the interactions I had with people on the street involved illegal migrants, participants in the grey economy, people who were surviving outside of the legal system, and whose activities involved a certain degree of illegality and grey area of ethics. Their stories were an important part of understanding how place was constantly shaped yet the legitimacy of their actions was outside the scope of my research and hence not relevant. I took great care in anonymising the names of all participants, using initials and only first names where necessary. I removed all identification to specific shops or businesses that could connect traders and shop owners. The photographs and video recordings of the streetscape and events were a matter of public knowledge and fell within the public domain but my writing up did not make any connections with respondents, their stories, and their place of work in a way that they could be identified.
5. Throughout the entire process of data collection and writing up, I maintained an iterative discussion with my supervisory team about issues of ethicality, confidentiality, and also my own personal safety and level of comfort about the degree of my engagement with the streetscape. These constant checks ensured that I stayed on course with maintaining the ethical protocols.
6. All my data was and is stored in a private password protected external portable hard drive, backed up in a similar device, and placed under lock and key alongside all my other personal valuables in a number-coded electronic safe in my home which has burglar alarms and security cameras. I have never uploaded or shared any data on a cloud or any file server with public access where it may be vulnerable to hacking or illegal downloads or sharing. In future when this research study process is formally complete, the data in its entirety along with its back up files will be destroyed.

Appendix 5: Field Site



Rough outline of field site (Courtesy: Google Maps)



View of field site (Courtesy: Google Maps Street View – entrance from Belgrave Circle)



View of field site (Courtesy: Google Earth)



View of field site (Courtesy: Google Earth)



The Golden Mile



Mahatma Gandhi standing sentinel, occasionally remembered, mostly neglected



Shops that lend themselves to the brand identity of Golden Mile...allegedly





The glamorous.....and mundane





More glamour....more mundanity





Landmarks: St Marks CoE, now a conference and banqueting centre



Landmarks: the old Methodist church now the neighbourhood centre



Old mills, now run down, dilapidated, struggling to stay relevant



The old St Michael's Anglican Church, now the local radio station



Remnants of the area's old industrial past





Native working class habitats: old picture house, now a shopping mall;
 Site of an old shoe machinery factory, now a housing development





The Flyover – a tangible reminder of place history and changes in time: before and after



Appendix 6: Illustrated Stories of Practices: A Photo Capture



Streetscape impressions



After the demolition, the flyover turns away from the field site, desolate



Historic mills, now a residential development



Old railway line gives way to run down tenements, morphing into Sainsburys, demolished to make way for B&M, rest of land lying fallow



Street furniture, for rest, recuperation, connection, money lending, and marketplace shaping



Old tenements and baths, now library, Ken's site of pilgrimage



Old public baths in an era without sanitation and running water, now sports centre



People on the streetscape – residents, shoppers, visitors, nostalgia hunters



Only the lonely.....



Rapidly changing demographic.....



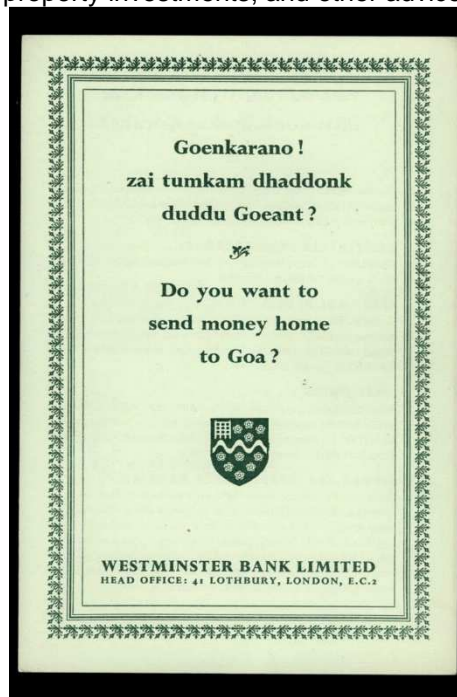


Competing for savings, banks from the sub-continent, and local high street banks making inroads into the market through canny sponsorship and political patronage

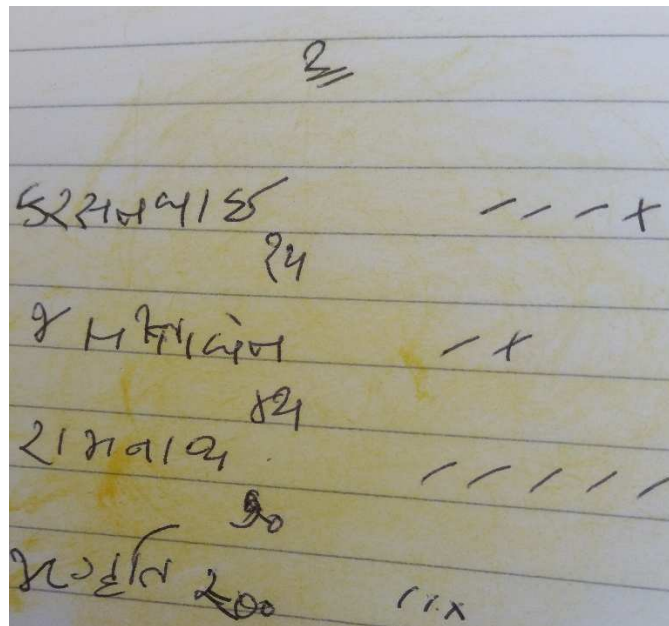




Overseas remittances, property investments, and other advice for a frugal populace....



One of the earliest overseas remittance posters designed in Konkani language to appeal to Goan immigrants – from the Westminster Bank archives....and Mr Pinto



Canny street side money lending....



An increasing sight on the street....





Culture, enterprise, market opportunity, and commodification – enforcing and clashing values



Ordinary, un-aesthetic retail and servicescapes...





Struggling retail shops...declining, vandalised, shut down....the tarnished Golden Mile...





Eating is serious business –the iconic Bobby's, other ethnic food shops, a philosophy of eating



Changing nature of eating – old Portuguese restaurant started by early immigrants, mostly closed than open; old working class pubs now shut down or in declining, changing demographic and new types of food shopping; the community centre still a lifeline of food for some....





Community hubs – the neighbourhood centre that brings together people from many backgrounds and purposes and is a lifeline; the Peepul Centre on the right, a status symbol for many



Two different sides to the streetscape: (L) the shiny new Peepul Centre that serves a more modern, progressive gathering; (R) a run-down dilapidated mill that is mostly in disuse but occasionally hosts dance classes offering a mix of styles



Old warehouses repurposed as temples, now rundown and in disuse....



Shop fronts selling prayer items...window displays...



Diwali celebrations on the street.... The neighbourhood centre all lit up....



Snapshots of street scenes during Diwali celebrations...



Screen grabs of video recordings of Diwali celebrations.....